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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Human rights

Information received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Summary

The present report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is prepared in the context of the in-depth dialogue between the Office and the members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Office draws attention to reports provided by it to the Forum at its previous sessions. It also invites members of the Forum to take note of the two recent reports submitted to the Human Rights Council related to indigenous peoples and aimed at contributing to the realization of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/HRC/9/11 and A/HRC/10/51). The report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people is contained in document A/HRC/9/9 and the report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on its first session can be found in document A/HRC/10/56. The present report identifies areas that OHCHR considers could be the subject of exchanges between the Office and the Permanent Forum, including a discussion on (a) the nature and form of advice that the Forum can give to OHCHR; (b) the nature of the information provided annually by OHCHR to the Forum; (c) the possible cooperation of members of the Forum with OHCHR in its activities at the country level; (d) the ways for improving dialogue between OHCHR and observers to the Forum, especially States and indigenous peoples' organizations; and (e) the appropriate ways of handling human rights complaints that may arise at sessions of the Forum.

* E/C.19/2009/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides information as requested by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and suggestions on areas for discussion as part of the in-depth dialogue that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) offered to engage in with the members of the Forum. The report should be read alongside other reports relating to indigenous peoples submitted to the Human Rights Council, in particular the two recent reports of the High Commissioner on the rights of indigenous peoples[1] and the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people[2] and the report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on its first session.[3] The Office also draws attention to the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between climate change and human rights,[4] which contains information relevant to the debate on climate change which took place at the seventh session of the Forum. The Office welcomes the opportunity to hold an in-depth dialogue with the Forum with the objective of enhancing the exchange of information and advice provided by members to the United Nations system, which is at the core of its mandate.

II. Recommendations addressed directly to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

2. In its report on its seventh session, the Forum recommended that OHCHR promote the elaboration of a report on the impact of climate change and indigenous peoples by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people.[5] The Special Rapporteur indicated that in the light of the creation of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, whose mandate is primarily research-based and study-oriented, he would not engage on a regular basis in thematic studies on his own, but rather provide input into the thematic work on issues of general concern to indigenous peoples and give priority to the examination of specific situations in which indigenous peoples' human rights are threatened and being violated. On 28 March 2008, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 7/23 on human rights and climate change, by which it expressed concern that climate change poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights and mandated OHCHR to conduct an analytical study of the relationship between climate change and human rights. At its seventh session, members of the Forum as well as observers were informed of the study and invited to make written contributions to it. The consultation process organized by the Office in the preparation of the study offered the opportunity for indigenous organizations to submit contributions to the Office, which hosted an open-ended consultation on the relationship between climate change and human rights on 22 October 2008 in Geneva. Andrea Carmen, Executive Director of the International Indian Treaty Council, was invited as a panellist to discuss the impact of climate change on the

[1] A/HRC/9/11 and A/HRC/10/51.
[2] A/HRC/9/9.
[3] A/HRC/10/56.
[4] A/HRC/10/61.
[5] E/2008/43, chap. I, para. 29.

human rights of indigenous peoples. The report of the Office on the relationship between climate change and human rights[6] discusses specific rights which relate directly to climate change-related threats, in particular the rights to life, food, water, health and housing. It stresses that important aspects of the right to self-determination include the right of a people not to be deprived of its own means of subsistence and underlines the specific situation of indigenous peoples. The report will be considered by the Human Rights Council at its tenth session, to be held in March 2009.

3. The Forum also recommended that OHCHR and relevant United Nations agencies and organs establish specific units for indigenous peoples' issues to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in accordance with articles 41 and 42 of the Declaration.[7] A dedicated unit was established within the Office following General Assembly resolutions 49/214 and 50/157 to support the activities related to indigenous peoples. At present, indigenous peoples' issues are dealt with in the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit, which covers issues related to indigenous peoples, minorities and victims of contemporary forms of slavery. Furthermore, the Office has, within its Special Procedures Division, the Groups in Focus Section, which supports, inter alia, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people.

4. The Forum recommended that OHCHR, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and other relevant United Nations agencies and offices provide necessary information and training on the universal periodic review process for and with indigenous peoples.[8] The Office participated, in September 2008, in a training session organized by the Indigenous Peoples' Centre for Documentation, Research and Information, during the Indigenous Peoples' Global Caucus which preceded the first session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to inform participants about the mandate of the Office regarding the universal periodic review process and the place and role of the review mechanism vis-à-vis existing international human rights mechanisms. At the invitation of the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, and with a specific focus on how non-governmental organizations can contribute to the review process, the Office gave a similar briefing session to African non-governmental organizations, including indigenous peoples' organizations and national human rights institutions, which gathered for three days at the NGO Forum prior to the forty-fourth ordinary session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, held in November 2008. The Office also introduced a training module on the universal periodic review for the indigenous representatives participating in the OHCHR fellowship programmes. Full information on the review can be found on the OHCHR website.

5. In its report on its sixth session, the Forum recommended that OHCHR conduct in 2007, in consultation with indigenous peoples' organizations, non-governmental organizations, experts, States and multilateral and bilateral agencies, the formulation of guidelines directed to all actors, both governmental and non-governmental, dealing with the respect and protection of the rights of

[6] A/HRC/10/61.

[7] E/2008/43, chap. I, para. 150.

[8] Ibid., para. 153.

indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact.[9] The Forum was informed at its previous sessions about the series of seminars that the Office had organized on the issue in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in November 2006 and in Quito in October 2007. A further workshop was organized in November 2008 by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and the International Indigenous Committee for the Protection of Peoples in Isolation and in Initial Contact of the Amazon, the Gran Chaco and Paraguay's Oriental Region (CIPIACI), with the participation of the Office and indigenous peoples' representatives to discuss ways and means to finalize the guidelines. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation is continuing to provide financial assistance to develop a programme of action for 2009-2010 which will be implemented by the Office together with IWGIA and the Instituto Promoción Estudios Sociales (IPES-ELKARTEA). The programme has two phases: the finalization of the draft guidelines, and implementation of the guidelines through the development of a special protection framework, as called for in the report of the Secretary-General on the draft programme of action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,[10] to ensure that the human rights of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact are effectively protected. A workshop will be held in March 2009 in Geneva to discuss and finalize the guidelines in cooperation with all relevant actors, in particular indigenous peoples' representatives and the concerned Governments of the region. The Forum will also be invited to contribute. A copy of the guidelines will be made available to the Forum and a related side event will be organized at the margin of the eighth session of the Forum.

6. At its second session, the Forum recommended that the United Nations system, particularly OHCHR and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), taking note of the World Bank's extractive industries review, organize a workshop on resource extraction and indigenous peoples to further discuss such issues as corporate accountability and the rehabilitation of mined out areas, polluted water bodies and compensation of adversely affected communities, sustainable development and land rights, with a view to developing a mechanism to address the issues.[11] The Workshop on Indigenous Peoples, Private Sector Natural Resource, Energy and Mining Companies and Human Rights, organized by the Office in December 2001 with the participation of a number of representatives of extractive industries, indigenous peoples and the United Nations system, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank, called for a second workshop to elaborate a draft framework for dialogue and implementation on consultation, benefit-sharing and dispute resolution in private sector projects affecting indigenous peoples.[12] Noting also the recommendation of the International Workshop on Perspectives of Relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Industrial Companies, organized by the Forum in July 2007, that a second workshop be held to elaborate a draft framework for dialogue and implementation on consultation, benefit-sharing and dispute resolution in private sector projects affecting indigenous peoples, the Office organized the International Workshop on Natural Resource Companies, Indigenous Peoples and

[9] E/2007/43, chap. I, para. 40.

[10] A/60/270, para. 51.

[11] E/2003/43, chap. I, para. 51.

[12] E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2002/3, Recommendations, para. 7 (b).

Human Rights: Setting a Framework for Consultation, Benefit-sharing and Dispute Resolution. The Workshop, held in Moscow in December 2008, reviewed case studies from Canada, New Caledonia, Indonesia, South Africa and the Russian Federation. The papers can be found on the website of the Office. The Workshop also benefited from experiences of other countries provided by participants from the private sector, the United Nations system, experts and indigenous peoples. The Permanent Forum was represented by Pavel Sulyandziga. The final report will be presented to the Expert Mechanism at its second session and an advance copy of the draft guidelines will be made available to members of the Forum for their comments. The papers and other information related to the Workshop can be found on the website of the Office.

III. Promotion of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

7. Articles 41 and 42 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples give the responsibility to the organs of the United Nations system to contribute to the full realization of the provisions of the Declaration and follow up its effectiveness. As the United Nations focal point for human rights, OHCHR has a crucial role to play in building awareness of this new human rights instrument and responding effectively to the challenge of its implementation at the national level.

8. The OHCHR field presences have been active in promoting the Declaration, organizing or participating in events related to the celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, translating the Declaration into national or indigenous languages, and developing tools to promote greater awareness of the existing standards to advance the rights of indigenous peoples. For example, the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, located in Yaoundé, organized jointly with the Ministry of Social Affairs of Cameroon, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), a media event to raise awareness about the human rights situation of indigenous communities in the region and promote the role of the Declaration in advancing their rights, with a specific focus on the right of free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples. With a view to promoting a better understanding of existing international standards related to indigenous peoples, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has developed a comparative review of the Declaration and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169) of ILO.

9. The Office also continues to ensure that indigenous peoples' issues are integrated in the work of the human rights mechanisms. Briefings on the Declaration were given at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of Special Rapporteurs, Representatives, Independent Experts and Chairpersons of Working Groups of the Human Rights Council in June 2008 and to several of the treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on Migrant Workers. Positive development should be noted regarding the rights of the child. At its fiftieth session, held in January 2009, the Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted General Comment No. 11 on indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, recalling the obligation of State parties under articles 2 and

30 of the Convention to promote and protect the human rights of all indigenous children, including specific references to the rights set forth in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

10. A communication strategy for promotion of the Declaration has also been developed within the Office, including products such as a pocket-sized version of the Declaration and a poster in all United Nations languages. A brochure of frequently asked questions for the general reader on the main provisions of the Declaration is also in preparation. In line with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action resulting from the World Conference against Racism, held in 2001, which acknowledged the challenges faced by indigenous peoples, including racism and racial discrimination, and called upon States to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Office will organize a side event in the margin of the Durban Review Conference to be held in Geneva in April 2009 in order to discuss how the Declaration is used to address various forms of racism that indigenous peoples are facing today.

11. The Indigenous Fellowship Programme also makes an important contribution to building up community capacity to defend human rights and is a concrete means for promoting understanding of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

IV. Mainstreaming of indigenous issues in country programmes and activities

12. In its efforts to integrate the rights of indigenous peoples into the country programmes of its field presences, the Office continues to provide training to its own staff working in the field. It organized the first pilot training workshop in Nepal in May 2007 for staff responsible for country engagement in Nepal, Afghanistan and Cambodia. The second workshop, which was held in Addis Ababa in November 2008, included staff from OHCHR country offices in Togo and Uganda, as well as other field presences, including human rights components of peacekeeping operations and human rights advisers from the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Cameroon, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, and also staff from the Regional Office for Eastern Africa in Addis Ababa. The training provided information on international standards, mechanisms and national developments relating to indigenous peoples. It also identified the main concerns and aspirations of indigenous peoples of the region and of the challenges in implementing change on the ground, and increased understanding of how to advance the rights of these groups through programme planning, implementation and evaluation, drawing on the experiences of the participants. The participants also discussed partnership opportunities with the United Nations system and civil society organizations.

13. In the same vein, and promoting a "one United Nations system approach" to addressing indigenous peoples' issues, the OHCHR Regional Office for South-East Asia, in cooperation with the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok's Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development (RIPP), held the first interactive regional dialogue on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the mechanisms on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and their relevance for United Nations work in South-East

Asia in Bangkok on 28 and 29 January 2009. United Nations experts participating in the dialogue included Vicky Tauli Corpuz, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, former Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, Virginia Dandan, member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and John Bernhard Henriksen, Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Participants in the two-day dialogue included the United Nations resident coordinators/UNDP resident representatives and other United Nations representatives from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and specialized agencies with regional presence in Bangkok. The aim of the dialogue was to contextualize the content of article 42 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which calls on the United Nations system, including at the country level, to promote respect for and full application of the provisions of the Declaration and follow up its effectiveness.

14. OHCHR field presences are also organizing inter-agency meetings to promote knowledge and understanding of the Declaration in order to ensure that internal policies properly reflect standards on indigenous peoples' rights and improve integration of indigenous peoples' rights into operational programming. National human rights institutions are also key partners because they operate at the domestic level and can articulate indigenous issues within national priorities. In Latin America, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean co-organized, together with UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), ILO, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Pan American Health Organization, a regional seminar on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples from 6 to 8 October 2008 in Lima, Peru. National human rights institutions and indigenous representatives from all countries of South America were invited to discuss ways of implementing the international and national legal instruments related to indigenous peoples at the national and regional levels. In Liberia, the human rights adviser of the Human Rights and Protection Section in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has been working since 2007 on good practices and lessons learned to advance the rights of indigenous peoples working for large multinational rubber plantations. A task force comprised of the Government and UNMIL was established to develop strategies aimed at improving the human rights situation of the indigenous peoples living in and working for rubber plantations.

15. As regards national implementation of the rights of indigenous peoples, the Office has been following up on recommendations of human rights mechanisms related to the situation of indigenous peoples in the Latin American region. A study on good practices, obstacles and challenges in the implementation of recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru was commissioned and co-financed by the Office, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The purpose of the study is to understand better the cause of the so-called implementation gap between laws and governmental commitments and their practical application on the ground. The study, prepared by an indigenous consulting team, was completed in July 2008 and published in November 2008.

16. The Office also gives priority to requests for technical cooperation from Governments. For example, the country office in Colombia provided thematic advice and facilitated a dialogue process between the department dealing with ethnic issues, placed under the Ministry of Interior and Justice, and the U'wa indigenous peoples. A series of meetings were organized in 2008 in different parts of the country bringing together indigenous leaders, organizations and key national institutions, including the Ombudsman Office and Procurador General de la Nación, to agree upon a document clarifying the procedure of consultation to be undertaken prior to any exploration and exploitation of mineral and other natural resources on the lands of the U'wa indigenous peoples. This resulted in a clearer understanding of the issue and the preparation of a guiding document which serves as a reference tool within the newly established unit on indigenous peoples under the Ministry of Interior and Justice to ensure full and effective consultation of the U'wa indigenous peoples prior to any activities on their lands.

17. The Office continues to provide thematic expertise and technical assistance regarding the development or strengthening of national legislation on the rights of indigenous peoples. In Ecuador, the Office is working on a draft law on indigenous justice in coordination with the Ministry of Justice. It is also developing human rights training modules on indigenous peoples for the judiciary, among others. The Office continues to give technical support to the Republic of the Congo for its legislative effort on the rights of indigenous peoples. Following a series of meetings to help the drafters align the document with existing human rights standards, in particular the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Office organized in August 2008, together with UNICEF in Brazzaville and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of the Congo, a two-day briefing session for parliamentarians to promote a better understanding of the rights of indigenous peoples and facilitate the passage of the law through Parliament.

18. In its efforts to engage Governments in a dialogue with indigenous peoples in the framework of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, located in Yaoundé, will organize in April 2009 a regional workshop, inviting both Governments and indigenous peoples from eight Central African countries to discuss the main issues faced by the indigenous peoples in the region and how to advance their human rights.

19. Capacity-building and awareness-raising workshops organized by field presences are also on the increase. The Office in Nepal launched a three-month social inclusion project in 2006 to map out the issues of indigenous peoples and minorities in Nepal. Based on the report of the project, the Office carried out a number of activities to build their capacity and developed a cartoon series as a tool for raising awareness on the right of indigenous peoples and minorities to access the justice system. The question of the indigenous legal system vis-à-vis the formal justice system was also addressed by the Office in Guatemala, which published a study in May 2008 on the access to justice, including a comparative analysis of the two systems. The study is intended for indigenous and formal justice practitioners.

V. Proposals for contribution to in-depth dialogue

20. The Office welcomes the opportunity to hold an in-depth dialogue with the Forum and proposes the following areas as a starting point for the discussions:

Nature and scope of advice provided by the Forum. The core mandate of the Forum is to provide advice on indigenous issues to the United Nations system through the Economic and Social Council. At present, advice to OHCHR comes mainly in the form of recommendations addressed either to the secretariat or to human rights bodies or mechanisms. The value of these recommendations is that they provide an understanding of where the Forum considers priorities in relationship to human rights should lie. However, there is opportunity for more substantive inputs into the work being undertaken by the Office and the mechanisms in particular. For example, OHCHR was able to draw upon the discussions on climate change held at the Forum at its seventh session in the preparation of the High Commissioner's report on climate change and human rights for the tenth session of the Human Rights Council, to be held in March 2009, and members of the Forum could also have contributed directly to the study. Similarly, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in preparing its general comment on indigenous children, might have benefited from the contributions of Forum members. The Office considers that a further discussion would be helpful to reflect on ways in which the Forum can contribute to these kinds of outputs of the human rights bodies and mechanisms.

Nature and form of information provided. At present OHCHR, like other United Nations agencies, provides annual reports on how it has taken up specific proposals of the Forum. It also provides general information on the activities it has undertaken on indigenous issues. However, the Office would like to have a sense of whether the information provided is of use to members and, in particular, whether the information contributes to the realization of the mandate of the Forum. It may be noted that the reports generate very few questions from members and almost no dialogue with observers, including States and indigenous peoples. Is there a need to reformulate the reports in some way so as to stimulate a more dynamic exchange of views?

Dialogue with observers. The Forum attracts a large number of observers, including representatives of States, indigenous organizations and experts. The annual sessions of the Forum, therefore, offer a unique opportunity to hold a broad discussion on the work of United Nations agencies with stakeholders, in particular Governments and indigenous community leaders who attend the sessions and want to see action at the local level. In some cases United Nations agencies, including OHCHR, have in their delegations staff from the field. How can the Forum enhance and make use of the presence of these first-hand experiences and draw lessons for its work at the international level?

Avoiding duplication of efforts. One of the challenges facing the United Nations system as a whole, including the Forum, is how to ensure the coherence and cooperation of its programmes. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues was created to provide a space in which United Nations agencies working on indigenous issues could cooperate and keep themselves informed of each other's work. The Forum is invited to the annual meetings and contributes actively. Notwithstanding these initiatives and given the need to maximize the effective use of the limited resources available to support indigenous issues, OHCHR considers

that further exchange of views is needed to enhance cooperation and avoid duplication. The establishment of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which held its first session in October 2008, and in which the Forum was represented, gives renewed importance to the question of cooperation.

Cooperation at the country level. OHCHR has greatly increased its field presences in recent years and has capacity in more than 50 countries. This means that there is some potential for individual members of the Forum to play a role in OHCHR country activities. This has already taken place in several countries such as the Russian Federation and Guatemala. OHCHR has an interest in hearing the views of the Forum members on how it might draw on their substantive contributions to our work in the field.

Human rights violations. OHCHR is aware of the numerous human rights complaints brought to the attention of the Forum each year and also of the role of the Forum as an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council without any formal mandate to act upon violations. Efforts to date have consisted in ensuring the presence of the Special Rapporteur on indigenous people at sessions of the Forum so that he can hear first-hand these submissions and act on them if he considers it appropriate. The Office, at the request of the Forum, has also facilitated the participation of other special procedure mandate holders so that observers are made aware of the range of mechanisms available in cases of human rights violations. Clearly this is an issue of fundamental importance to many participants and the Office believes that further discussion on how these can be addressed in a systematic way is necessary.

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Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations agencies and funds

Information received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Summary

The present submission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is prepared in the context of the in-depth dialogue between FAO and the members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

* E/C.19/2009/1.

09-24943 (E) 200309

I. Introduction

1. The in-depth dialogue to be held during the eighth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues offers a good opportunity for substantive discussion between international development organizations and representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as other partners in civil society. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has agreed to take part in this dialogue in order to provide a forthright account of its engagement with indigenous peoples' issues, including trends, gaps and constraints on action. It is also a good occasion for FAO managers and officers to become more aware of the problems of indigenous peoples. It is FAO's hope that the report will lead to greater understanding of how it works, under what conditions its work with indigenous peoples takes place and in what capacity it contributes to global efforts to better the lives of indigenous populations. The desire to clarify what can reasonably be expected from FAO, but also what the Organization itself should be aware of, has prompted the preparation of this report and the accompanying dialogue.

2. The engagement of FAO with indigenous issues has been increasing in recent years, motivated by a growing recognition of the precarious conditions in which many indigenous peoples live and in response to strengthened commitment on the part of national authorities. Projects with an indigenous component take place in many countries with which FAO has an ongoing collaboration and where indigenous communities are present. Furthermore, triggered in part by the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, this trend is growing. Nevertheless, there are significant constraints to FAO's engagement with indigenous issues, and these will be explained along with the positive trends.

3. The work of FAO with indigenous peoples is defined by certain institutional and organizational factors that influence the nature of development interventions and determine its capacity to work on this issue. Support to indigenous peoples must respond to the same institutional directive that governs all FAO projects and programmes. All activities undertaken by FAO must be consistent with its overall mandate, defined in the following terms: to "achieve food security for all, raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and thus contribute to the growth of the world economy". The implications of this prerequisite will be reviewed in this report, along with an analysis of the work of FAO in this field, the limitations of its engagement and the opportunities for the future.

II. Work on indigenous issues

4. The work of FAO on indigenous issues takes place at three levels: field, research and policy/normative. Each level is an integral component of the organization's mission, and FAO makes an important effort at each level to improve the conditions in which indigenous peoples live and to amend the discriminatory constraints to which they are subject.

A. Work at the field and project level

5. Field projects are one area in which the work of FAO with indigenous peoples is most visible. Their purpose is to provide technical support in areas consistent with its specialization in agriculture and other dimensions of food security. The projects generally follow one of two types of engagement: those that are formulated specifically for indigenous peoples, and those that include indigenous peoples as part of a larger beneficiary population. The latter type is of potential benefit to indigenous peoples in that there is a degree of interaction with the natural or social environment in which indigenous and other communities live, although indigenous peoples are not treated as partners or recipients in this instance.

6. The following section discusses projects and programmes in Latin America that contain an indigenous component. The decision to focus on a single region is motivated by the desire to give a more substantive account of FAO interventions in one of its primary field locations. Therefore, instead of submitting a broad overview of different projects from around the world, a more thorough picture of FAO's programmatic approach to indigenous issues in Latin America will be offered, making it possible to improve understanding of the types of interventions and their key operational characteristics as they apply to a specific context. Other regions are expected to be covered in subsequent sessions of the Forum.

A focus on Latin America

7. FAO involvement with indigenous peoples varies in scope and level of financial support, depending on the nature of the activity, the amount of funding, the type of donor and the type of collaboration. As mentioned above, projects with an indigenous component either work directly with and for indigenous peoples or they include indigenous peoples as beneficiaries along with other rural populations. The two will be discussed separately.

Projects specifically supporting indigenous peoples

8. About a third of FAO projects in Latin America with an indigenous component specifically focus on indigenous peoples. Numerically, this accounts for approximately 50 projects.[1] A more significant effort to address indigenous peoples as special groups occurs in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru. Activities take place to a lesser extent in Argentina, Brazil and Panama. For the rest of the region, projects with an indigenous component either do not take place or benefit indigenous peoples indirectly by including them as constituents in a larger recipient group.

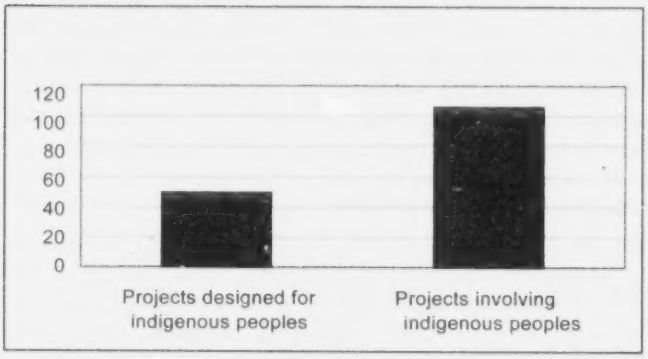
9. Nearly all projects that address indigenous peoples specifically are smaller in scale. For the most part they consist of telefood initiatives, which are small, self-contained agriculture, livestock or fisheries projects that help specific groups of people — mostly small communities or organizations — achieve greater livelihood security through the generation of more food or income. They are generally limited to a time frame of a year, with a budget of less than $10,000. In general, small-scale initiatives include indigenous peoples throughout the project cycle, especially women, and sometimes indigenous youth. Training and participation are key

[1] Numbers and estimates are approximate figures.

elements of this type of project, where members of indigenous communities gain capacities in food production and productivity in an economically and environmentally sustainable way. Indigenous communities in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru have taken part in activities of this type.

10. Two types of projects formulated explicitly for indigenous peoples are the regional initiatives funded by donor Governments. Regional projects involve two or more countries sharing certain geographical features or thematic concerns. In Latin America there is a group of projects that operate in this way, and most of them have an environmental focus. Animal conservation, for example, is supported in indigenous communities of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, where food security is linked to the preservation of local species. Another regional project in the high-Andean areas of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru is focused on the strengthening of the capacity of indigenous organizations to produce food for consumption and sale. To that end, it is promoting the recovery of traditional products and their associated production systems. Regional projects of this type take into account the needs of indigenous peoples while often incorporating local knowledge, livelihood systems and culture into project designs. As for the small-scale projects, they too emphasize participation and interactive exchange.

Figure I
FAO projects in Latin America[a]



[a] Data refers only to those projects in Latin America with an indigenous component.

11. Country-level projects that specifically address indigenous peoples are taking place in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru. FAO has supported approximately 15 projects of this type in recent years. Unlike small-scale or regional projects, their activities are directed at the national or subregional level, with larger funds and over longer periods of time. These types of intervention focus predominantly on institutional, technical and administrative support to national stakeholders (government and civil society) and generally seek improvements in their capacity to tackle the development concerns of indigenous peoples in a coherent and comprehensive way, without isolating them from broader development efforts taking place. Projects related to food security and natural resource management are the most characteristic. They provide technical support in areas such as the establishment of viable agriculture, nutrition

improvement, sustainable management of natural resources and the conservation of globally important agricultural heritage systems, many of which are indigenous systems. At least two projects have supported indigenous peoples following natural disasters. Their aim is to help restore viable agricultural activities after an emergency. Two additional projects, in Chile and Colombia, are focused on human-induced crises. Indigenous peoples that have been victimized by civil violence due to land disputes or discrimination have been the focus of these conflict prevention initiatives.

12. Four multi-agency projects in Latin America are directly targeted to indigenous peoples. In this regard, FAO works in collaboration with other United Nations agencies as a team, where each gives a specific technical contribution related to its individual mandate. Funding for such projects often comes from donors that are particularly sensitive to factors of social exclusion and cultural diversity. Since cross-agency cooperation is also stipulated, they offer a great opportunity for United Nations agencies and programmes to collaborate as a unified system. Generally, this type of intervention shows a strong commitment to inter-disciplinary development and socio-cultural awareness, encouraging direct engagement with indigenous peoples. In Panama and Ecuador, FAO is cooperating in projects that have an environmental dimension: it provides assistance to indigenous communities in preserving their natural surroundings, and therefore their own livelihoods. In Honduras and Ecuador, FAO is supporting projects that aim to integrate cultural diversity into public policy and local development interventions.

Projects that include indigenous peoples

13. In addition to the projects outlined above, in which indigenous peoples are identified as a specific group and a concerted effort is made to address their needs and to include them as effective participants in the planning process and programming cycle, FAO is involved in a number of projects that aim to create positive development outcomes for rural populations, including many indigenous peoples. These projects either take place in areas where indigenous peoples are highly concentrated geographically, such as the Andes, the Amazon, Central America and certain coastal regions, or they include indigenous peoples owing to their focus on vulnerable and marginal communities more generally. In the latter case, the project objective is to work with indigenous peoples by definition rather than by clear intent. For this reason, a concerted effort is not made to identify the specific needs and development concerns of those indigenous peoples present. Nevertheless, substantial benefits may result.

14. Many food security interventions take place in the Andean region because of the difficult living conditions in those areas (for example in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru), but also in other poor countries such as Nicaragua and Honduras. Interventions with this focus seek to increase access to and quality of food through different forms of technical assistance. In countries such as Ecuador, El Salvador and Mexico, FAO works through its special programme for food security to strengthen the capacity of public and private institutions, as well as of farmers and international organizations, to tackle food security concerns and to manage and coordinate responses that include the most vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples. At the regional level, its Right to Food Unit has also undertaken a number of activities in Latin America. In Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay and Nicaragua, projects have supported legislative and policy processes to guarantee the right to

adequate food for vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples. Closely related to food security are initiatives that address the economic gains and opportunities of disadvantaged stakeholders. Most of these are small-scale initiatives, but some are also national, predominately in Mexico and Paraguay.

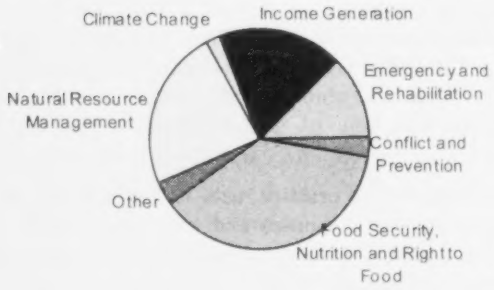
15. There are also two interventions for adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts on rural communities. For instance, FAO, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, is developing pilot adaptation measures in the Colombian massif aimed at strengthening the sustainable practices of indigenous communities and other rural inhabitants. It is also working to integrate environmental issues within the national development agenda, with an emphasis on reducing vulnerabilities in the most affected groups. Similar efforts are under way in Guatemala and Peru.

16. In Honduras, Guatemala, Ecuador, Belize, Colombia, Nicaragua and Bolivia, where natural disasters have had devastating impact on marginal communities, including some indigenous ones, emergency relief and rehabilitation projects are being implemented. In projects of this type, FAO works to re-establish the first cycle of agricultural activity following a period of crisis. The aim is to give affected communities the chance to regenerate production when they have been hard-hit by natural phenomena. Additionally, FAO had helped to build capacity for disaster risk management in the agricultural sector in a number of countries. These efforts focus on strengthening national and local institutions to carry out disaster mitigation, preparedness and response. The point is to ensure that even the most vulnerable have some degree of protection in emergency situations.

17. For the most part, only limited work on indigenous issues occurs in the small island Caribbean States, as well as in other countries like Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Argentina and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

18. In sum, FAO's work on indigenous issues follows two types of engagement. A specific focus on indigenous peoples is clearly more desirable, but given that FAO's mandate is technical in nature, its work is generally dominated by efforts to support indigenous peoples as members of rural populations. Nevertheless, efforts of the latter kind are also important.

Figure II
Distribution of projects according to thematic focus[a]



[a] Data refers to all FAO projects in Latin America with an indigenous component.

B. Research

19. FAO's role in generating credible, high quality technical knowledge and research in the field of food and agriculture reinforces its work at the field level. FAO has undertaken a number of research projects that focus on indigenous peoples and various aspects of their environment. Their purpose is to deepen global and governmental understanding of certain topics or certain contexts.

20. One example is a collaborative initiative between FAO and the Centre for Indigenous Peoples Nutrition and Environment (CINE) at McGill University in Canada, which has explored the concepts of food security and food sovereignty as they relate to indigenous peoples. In 12 case studies from different indigenous communities around the world, FAO and CINE professionals have documented the nutritional composition of their food systems and their correlation to the health levels of consumers. These case studies have demonstrated that products derived from indigenous peoples' local ecosystems generally provide much greater nutritional value and energy content than those derived purely from the market. Traditional food practices are being threatened by environmental degradation, migration to urban areas and lack of resources due to poverty. As a result, indigenous peoples increasingly resort to market products. The inadequate nutrient quality of purchased "globalized foods" is manifested in poor health consequences such as decayed and missing teeth, obesity, heart disease and other conditions. These conditions have traditionally been linked to "rich" societies, and the fact that they are now also surfacing in the lowest socio-economic strata — of which many indigenous communities are part — has opened a new dimension in health-related development work. Indeed, the poor health status of indigenous children and adults is a growing concern.

21. A methodology for understanding local traditional food systems of indigenous peoples was developed with FAO support. It outlines procedures for documenting traditional food practices and nutritional contents. Among other things, it covers field sampling, laboratory methods, dietary analysis, assessment of environmental constraints and planning food-based interventions. It also suggests ways to develop adequate cooperation with indigenous partners, based on extensive experience in the field with different indigenous communities. These procedures offer development professionals a practical methodology for formulating food-based interventions to improve nutrition and physical well-being. They can also be applied by indigenous peoples themselves.[2] Currently, FAO and the Centre have joined forces in promoting the recovery of traditional indigenous food systems in order to reverse negative health trends and recover some of the environmental and cultural richness in indigenous lands.[3]

22. FAO, through research and practice, uses its projects and programmes to help raise awareness about gender dynamics and local knowledge. The new strategic framework 2010-2013, approved by the FAO special session held in November 2008, identifies the 11 fundamental strategic objectives of its work. One of these is gender, meaning that gender and social equality are a fundamental area of FAO's work. Equally relevant is the strategic objective dealing with more equitable access to and secure tenure of natural resources, in which indigenous peoples and women are specifically mentioned. The new framework also refers to traditional and local knowledge. For instance, the strategic objective on improved food security and nutrition emphasizes the benefit that can accrue from greater utilization of locally specific knowledge tools and resources. These areas of work can certainly gain from the specialized knowledge of indigenous peoples.

23. Recently, FAO has commissioned a study on the linkages between indigenous peoples, gender and indigenous knowledge systems for food security. This comprehensive review has made clear that, in spite of discrimination and dispossession, many indigenous women and men sustain unique biological and cultural systems that help foster the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity, including thousands of traditional animal breeds, traditional domesticated crops, landraces and plant varieties, as well as micro-organisms used for food and drinks. Gender-based knowledge systems are particularly important because men and women know different things and therefore offer different contributions to food security and conservation processes. This is evident in projects such as the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems initiative (GIAHS), where FAO is supporting indigenous and other rural peoples in efforts to maintain their ingenious agricultural heritage systems for their own benefit and that of humanity and demonstrates the relevance of linking indigenous knowledge of natural resource management to development efforts in organizations such as FAO.[4]

24. Currently, FAO is developing basic guidelines for development projects on how to build on traditional knowledge. The objective is to improve the capacity of

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[2] See http://www.mcgill.ca/files/cine/ProcedureManual_Introduction.pdf.

[3] H. Kuhnlein, "Indigenous peoples food systems: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health" (to be published).

[4] E. Reichel, "Indigenous knowledge, gender-based knowledge systems, and the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity of food and agriculture: an overview for FAO" (to be published).

FAO staff and other interested parties to integrate useful local knowledge into the development process. Indigenous peoples will benefit from such an approach as well.

C. Normative work: policy instruments and their operational dimensions

25. Besides its role in field projects and research, FAO also engages in important policy and normative work in order to make development at the local, national and international level more effective.

26. As part of its core functions, FAO is involved in the negotiation of international instruments, the establishment of international norms, standards and voluntary guidelines, and support to the development and implementation of national legal instruments.

27. Most normative instruments that FAO has helped to develop are of relevance to indigenous peoples. A number of normative instruments refer explicitly to indigenous peoples or indigenous communities.[5] Others are of implicit benefit to indigenous and other rural populations, as they work to influence the social or natural environments of which they are part. Although many of the instruments form part of the so-called non-binding soft law, they provide Governments with moral obligations and policy guidance which do indeed hold weight. For indigenous peoples, they can serve as advocacy tools to promote good practices and sensitive policy.

28. Interviews with FAO staff and an analysis of existing documentation revealed a general lack of awareness of indigenous issues in FAO's normative instruments. Clarifying how indigenous peoples and other stakeholders can make greater use of these normative instruments for their own practical benefit would help to render them more accessible and operational. Indeed, all stakeholders involved in the implementation of these instruments must be aware of the specific provisions on indigenous peoples included in some of these instruments. It is hoped that general and specific awareness-raising efforts on indigenous issues related to these normative instruments will reduce the awareness gap among FAO staff, development workers, Governments and indigenous peoples themselves and lead to an improved understanding of these instruments from an indigenous peoples' perspective.

29. FAO recently analysed two normative FAO instruments: the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries[6] and the Right to Food Guidelines.[7] The objective is to provide guidance on the impact and benefits of these instruments from an indigenous peoples' perspective. The main points of the analysis are summarized below.

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[5] See International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Right to Food Guidelines, Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Voluntary Guidelines on Fire Management, and Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Management of Planted Forests.

[6] See www.fao.org/fishery/ccrf/en.

[7] FAO, *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security*, http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5906m/Y5906M08.htm.

FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

30. The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was unanimously adopted in 1995 by the twenty-eighth session of the FAO Conference and provides a framework for national and international efforts to ensure the sustainable exploitation of aquatic living resources in harmony with the environment. While voluntary in nature, parts of it are based on relevant rules of international law. It is the most comprehensive document that exists so far on fishery-related activities. It is therefore of great significance to indigenous peoples whose livelihoods are based on fishing practices.

31. A careful look at the content of the code shows that concepts of equity, fairness and right to livelihood, which are important to indigenous fishing communities, are included. Particular attention is drawn to the rights of all categories of fishers and to the importance of consultation and participation of fishing communities within decision-making processes. More technical issues such as sustainable fishing practices, coastal zone management and trade are also addressed. There is no doubt that indigenous communities would benefit greatly if relevant articles of the code were incorporated into national legislation and implemented as national policies in accordance with ILO Convention No. 169 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

32. The code itself is not tailored to indigenous peoples specifically, but it does regulate issues of relevance to indigenous fishing communities. For example, the code — as well as other related international initiatives and instruments — encourages countries to encompass sustainable utilization of fisheries resources. A central element of the code is the increased participation of resource users, which reverses the approach from a top-down process to a participatory and interactive one. This is also in line with the principle and right to free, prior and informed consent.

33. In its efforts to support the implementation of the code, FAO should ensure that the different stakeholders involved in the fisheries sector are aware of the interests and needs of indigenous fishing communities. At the same time, indigenous fishing communities should also use the code to lobby their national Governments to implement and apply its stipulations in a manner that respects their rights and interests.

34. It is necessary to translate gaps and concerns into action and to implement fundamental fisheries reform through effective legislation, policies and public participation for the benefit of indigenous peoples. FAO staff and fisheries lawyers and administrators at national and local levels are strongly encouraged to address the concerns and the positions of indigenous peoples in the fisheries sector.

Right to Food Guidelines

35. The Right to Food Guidelines were adopted unanimously by the FAO Council in 2004. They reflect a consensus among FAO members on what needs to be done in all of the most relevant policy areas to promote food security using a human rights-based approach. The guidelines are voluntary in nature but build on international law and provide practical guidance for the implementation of the right to adequate food at the national level. They refer to "indigenous peoples" or "indigenous

communities" explicitly in the context of access to resources and assets. Indigenous peoples are also referred to implicitly as members of vulnerable groups in several other guidelines. The guidelines assert that States should pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable groups, which include indigenous peoples. The guidelines are valuable because they move away from the theoretical to the practical, and assist governments in realizing everyone's right to food, in particular the most needy and hungry. They translate human rights principles, such as non-discrimination, into concrete recommendations for action. For example, the guidelines invite States to collect disaggregated data on the food insecurity, the vulnerability and the nutritional status of different groups in society, which is also fundamental for highlighting the discrimination suffered by indigenous peoples. Thus, the guidelines provide a basis for advocating more equitable policies and programmes, paving the way for indigenous peoples to promote their right to food in all areas that intersect with this right.

36. The guidelines can help Governments design appropriate policies, strategies and legislation that focuses on the most vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples. Although voluntary, because they arise from a consensus among FAO member States, the Guidelines can have a significant influence on State policies and on the realization of the right to food of vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples.

III. An analytical assessment of the work of FAO with indigenous peoples

37. This section contains an analytical assessment of FAO's work with indigenous peoples, highlighting important achievements, lessons and discrepancies in FAO's approach to indigenous issues. At the same time, it outlines positive trends and opportunities for better engagement in the future.

Identified strengths and lessons learned

38. The greatest contribution of FAO to global development work is its high-quality technical capacities and its engagement at the international and national policy levels. These strengths enable FAO to influence the policies, planning strategies and development projects undertaken by national Governments. FAO has made an increasing effort to engage indigenous peoples in work related to food security and nutrition, sustainable natural resource management, income generation, and emergency support. Several research and policy instruments have helped to raise awareness about indigenous issues and to integrate those issues into national development planning.

39. However, the analysis of projects and programmes from Latin America has demonstrated a number of limitations in the work of FAO with indigenous peoples at the field level. These limitations must not be ignored.

40. It is evident in the analysis regarding Latin America that the work of FAO with indigenous peoples per se is quite limited, and that only a small proportion of projects actually take into account their specific needs and development concerns. In reality, most FAO projects simply take place in regions where the majority of

peoples happen to be indigenous; therefore, project objectives require working with indigenous peoples by definition, rather than by true intent. This is the most fundamental limitation that characterizes the work of FAO in this field. The need to work with indigenous peoples as a special group is therefore evident, even though the organization has no specific mandate to do so. After all, the mandate of FAO is directed at the rural poor, and it cannot be denied that indigenous peoples constitute an important minority of the most vulnerable and most marginalized rural communities.

41. Projects specifically formulated for indigenous communities imply a concrete effort to involve indigenous peoples throughout the project cycle and to consider their livelihood systems more carefully. Although some projects meet the criteria of the United Nations Declaration, the primary clients of FAO are Governments and therefore its engagement in indigenous peoples' issues is often limited. There are very few projects that are specifically designed to meet the needs of indigenous peoples, and even fewer that seek their prior and informed consent. FAO needs to make a greater effort to mainstream the concerns and perspectives of indigenous peoples throughout the organization, at both headquarters and decentralized levels, including member Governments. Only in this way will it be possible to address indigenous issues more systematically and in compliance with the Declaration and the principles of indigenous peoples themselves.

42. New opportunities are nonetheless evolving, and it is the intention of FAO to offer its technical assistance where it is possible and important to do so. The United Nations Collaborative Partnership for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation is one example where efforts are being made to consult and include indigenous peoples, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Response to Permanent Forum recommendations over the years

43. Implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum is taken very seriously at FAO. Most of the recommendations have been followed, or are being carried out through projects that are still operationally active. In fact, many activities being undertaken in fulfilment of the recommendations are viewed as ongoing processes. This section contains a comprehensive review of the recommendations that have been directed at FAO and the organization's response to them. They have been clustered according to subject matter and type of recommendation (the identification of these clusters is based in part on the categories used by the Permanent Forum itself).

A. Technical work on issues related to the mandate of FAO

44. These recommendations relate to projects and training at the field or community level, that are linked to the particular expertise FAO has to offer. They cover food security, nutrition, agriculture and associated issues such as health effects, biodiversity and environmental conservation. In considering the relationship between food, indigenous diet, health and subsistence lifestyles, FAO has been active in its partnership with the Centre for Indigenous Peoples Nutrition and Environment. Important information about the inherent quality of traditional

indigenous food systems has been ascertained and projects relating to the nutrition and health of indigenous peoples are under way.

45. A technical workshop to promote models for environmental and sustainable development governance among Forum members, State representatives and indigenous peoples has not taken place, as recommended to FAO and other organizations (among others, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and UNDP). Nevertheless, FAO has undertaken a great deal of project work on issues related to this recommendation. Cultural and biological diversity, for example, are the focus of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) project, which seeks to keep ingenious agricultural systems intact around the world, many of them in indigenous communities. Another issue referred to in conjunction with the suggested workshop is traditional knowledge and its potential linkage to scientific knowledge. Traditional knowledge was a core component of FAO LinKS project (Local Indigenous Knowledge Systems) in southern Africa, which highlighted the proficiency of local knowledge systems in managing natural resources for food security. These characterize the effort of FAO to support indigenous agricultural systems and their associated biodiversity, foods, knowledge systems and cultures.

46. In partnership with indigenous peoples' organizations, FAO, through its Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Initiative, has also developed cultural indicators of indigenous peoples' food and agro-ecological systems. The cultural indicators are increasingly being used by indigenous peoples to assess their conditions of food security and sustainable development. For example, indigenous communities in Rio Yaqui, Sonora, Mexico, and in other regions are using them to determine the impacts of decreasing rainfall on traditional farming activities in their areas, as well as their own traditional knowledge about using seeds (corn, squash and beans) and drought-resistant methods.

47. Following the Forum recommendation, a symposium on the protection of sacred sites took place in Tokyo in June 2005. It was organized by UNESCO, together with the secretariat of FAO, as well as of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Permanent Forum, under the title "The Role of Sacred Natural Sites in Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity". Land issues are in fact a core focus at FAO. In response to another recommendation by the Forum, FAO is fostering an open discussion to develop a participatory methodology to deal with participatory land delimitation targeting the specific needs of indigenous peoples. The methodology is partially based on field experiences over the last few years, which have yielded some initial positive results, particularly in a San community in Angola, where an official land title has been issued in the name of that community. Other methodologies are also being tested and should support the adaptation of the methodological approach. As a result, FAO would be able to contribute expertise and new knowledge on those topics when the opportunity arises.

B. Policy and institutional issues

48. Some recommendations refer to processes internal to FAO: they encourage a shift in institutional commitment towards indigenous peoples' issues and seek to mainstream these issues into the organization's operations. The process of developing an FAO policy on indigenous peoples began in 2002, when this recommendation was first articulated. A comprehensive draft strategic framework was completed within two years, but, due to a reorganization within FAO, it was not possible to complete the process at that time. Although an explicit FAO policy on indigenous peoples is not yet in place, a new draft is ready and it will soon be sent out for comments to the Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) and some indigenous peoples' organizations, before it is submitted to senior management for clearance. In the meantime, renewed efforts are being made to raise greater awareness about indigenous issues within FAO. An organizational focal point was established in 2002, along with a working group composed of officers from different technical departments and regional offices. FAO is also actively involved in various networks such as the Inter-Agency Support Group.

49. Other recommendations revolve around the need to integrate indigenous peoples' concerns, perspectives and practices into development processes in order to expand paradigms on how development ought to work. In response to this more holistic vision of development, many normative instruments developed by FAO now reflect considerations of indigenous and other vulnerable peoples. The Right to Food Guidelines, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources are among the instruments available to FAO with specific provisions and stipulations for addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples.

50. At the 2008 FAO Conference, the important role of smallholders in the use, development and conservation of livestock resources was officially recognized. In response, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources are preparing an analytical assessment of this issue, and progress in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources was welcomed by the Forum in its latest session. Importantly, the assessment acknowledges the need for capacity-building and institutional support to address the particular needs of small-scale livestock production systems, while ensuring respect for the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities. FAO is also exploring other opportunities to implement relevant national legislation and international agreements.

C. Capacity-building and awareness-raising for indigenous peoples, development professionals, United Nations agencies, Governments and other stakeholders

51. These recommendations urge Governments and the United Nations system to build capacities to respond to the needs of indigenous peoples, protect their rights and include them in decision-making processes. They also encourage awareness-raising about indigenous peoples' conditions so that greater sensitivity and

understanding can be institutionalized. Any FAO activity on indigenous issues naturally seeks to support Government efforts to enable indigenous peoples to sustain their own livelihoods. The FAO policy of support to Governments is centred on making national development planning more responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable. For example, FAO has recently begun a project in Ecuador to develop and implement a national policy on rural women entitled "Politica Nacional Prioritaria para Mujeres Rurales" (PNPMR). The objective is to increase national and local level capacity to respond to the individual and collective needs of rural women from different ethnic and cultural groups, through consciousness-raising, creation of participatory mechanisms, and improved institutional mechanisms for the protection of rural women's rights and their multicultural expressions and needs.

52. Concerns about indigenous women are receiving increasing attention, partly in response to the recommendations issued by the Forum at its third session, and, generally, also in conjunction with greater gender mainstreaming efforts in FAO. FAO holds regular gender training sessions in different countries. A component relating to the United Nations Declaration and the United Nations Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues has been recently included in these sessions to raise awareness simultaneously about gender and indigenous issues.

D. Information and knowledge generation and communication initiatives

53. These recommendations relate to the generation of information and knowledge on issues related to indigenous peoples, and include research on the living conditions of indigenous peoples, the challenges they face and other relevant subjects. FAO has invested considerable effort to specify indigenous peoples' issues in studies on land, biofuel production, protected areas and traditional knowledge. A publication focusing specifically on FAO and indigenous peoples will soon be released.

54. FAO has also tried to respond to the recommendation to address the limited access to communication and information services that indigenous peoples often face. FAO has long been involved in using communication tools to advance sustainable rural development, including specific activities in recent years on communication for and by indigenous peoples. FAO welcomes the positive response of the Forum to the development of indigenous peoples' communication platforms in Latin America and Canada. At the moment, however, the platform in Latin America is facing some difficulties and, although the possibility of extending this initiative to Asia and Africa is being sought, no significant progress has yet been made. It is important that some follow-up regarding these platforms takes place with other United Nations partners to determine if and how to proceed with this particular recommendation.

55. A response to the recommendation to establish an information network and integrated database on indigenous issues is currently in process. Technical consultations are under way to set up a database and a website page on indigenous issues within FAO.

E. Support to the Permanent Forum: reporting and other issues

56. Some recommendations simply relate to participation in Permanent Forum meetings. FAO has been an active participant in every session or expert meeting of the Forum, consistently providing regular reports and information.

F. Mobilization of resources and financial assistance

57. Recommendations in which FAO is asked to mobilize resources for projects by indigenous peoples or to provide financial support to the Forum or other bodies are not in tune with the nature and functions of FAO. By decree, all projects must be channelled through national authorities. FAO is not a financing institution — unlike institutions such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank — and, therefore, FAO does not accept proposals for project funding directly. This is a common misconception which must be cleared.

58. Furthermore, it is not within the mandate of FAO to cover financial training, although some training of indigenous peoples in the construction and management of savings and loans clubs and cooperatives at a community level does occur. These respond to the recommendation related to building indigenous peoples' capacities for financial management in order to support positive health choices.

G. Other issues

59. A few recommendations have not been fulfilled because they do not fall within the explicit mandate of FAO. For instance, addressing the needs of indigenous children has not been realized. FAO does not have a separate working unit specialized in children and youth. However, FAO remains available to provide technical support, if requested, by more relevant specialized agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Gaps and limitations in the work and approach of FAO: an overview

60. FAO has made substantial progress in considering indigenous peoples in its work over the last two decades. At the same time, the organization faces a number of institutional and organizational challenges that make the full mainstreaming of indigenous issues a complex and difficult process. This section discusses some of these issues in order to clarify how FAO works and the limits to its engagement. By extension, the section clarifies what can reasonably be expected from FAO and what simply lies outside its constitutional parameters.

61. Firstly, FAO has no specific mandate to work with indigenous peoples. There has not yet been an express directive by member States to focus on indigenous peoples, and FAO cannot, therefore, pursue the matter freely. This is a serious gap, but one which is expected to be tackled through the development and potential approval of an FAO policy on indigenous peoples.

62. The nature of FAO and the explicit regulations governing its work are the main reasons for its limitations in this field. As a specialized intergovernmental organization of the United Nations, its membership — 191 States as of 2008 — and governing bodies consist of government representatives. All projects, activities or

collaborative engagement must therefore be endorsed a priori by the national authority of the recipient country. FAO cannot engage in any action without the explicit endorsement of its member States. Indeed, all FAO projects with an indigenous component have been individually approved by the Government concerned. However, there is still no overall framework for action because member Governments have not requested an explicit focus on indigenous issues. For that reason, the degree to which FAO can commit its human and financial resources is presently restricted.

63. This absence of direct authorization translates into a certain degree of institutional resistance, as FAO officers are discouraged from engaging extensively in issues deemed supplementary, particularly under conditions of limited resources. By extension, there is little institutional commitment within FAO to issues which member States have not designated as priorities. Unfortunately, indigenous issues are not a priority for member Governments and therefore not a priority for the organization as a whole.

64. On these grounds, bilateral cooperation with indigenous organizations also lies outside the FAO mandate. Partnerships can exist only if country representatives have consented. Indeed, any programme or collaborative arrangement must be channelled through the relevant national authority.

65. FAO does not give grants or any other form of financial assistance. The support of FAO to indigenous peoples is necessarily channelled through technical assistance to Governments, rather than through direct financial assistance. The misconception of FAO as a financial source is widespread and must be corrected.

66. Despite the lack of an explicit directive to work with indigenous peoples, FAO does include indigenous peoples in some of its work. As seen in many field activities in Latin America, indigenous communities are at times the primary partners in FAO projects. In others, they benefit from larger interventions to improve the social or environmental conditions of life. Given the lack of an explicit mandate, however, engagement with indigenous peoples occurs primarily on an ad hoc basis, and is often dependent on the personal commitment and knowledge of the officers involved in a particular project. The absence of a strategic approach for FAO staff working with indigenous stakeholders is also a serious problem.

67. Discussions and consultations with FAO professionals have revealed that knowledge about indigenous peoples is quite limited, a factor which contributes to the uneven treatment of indigenous issues in the work of the organization. There is a need to promote better awareness about indigenous peoples among FAO staff, especially as the strong aptitude of staff would stand to benefit from capacity-building in sociological areas. The many projects which do not specify whether beneficiary populations are indigenous or not, even in locations with a high proportion of indigenous inhabitants, demonstrate the need for better sociological skills. Increasing basic understanding about who indigenous peoples are, what they want from the development process and how they wish to be involved would also help address this weakness. A general lack of disaggregate data by ethnicity or linguistic affiliation compounds the identification dilemma and also hinders better understanding. In addition, alternative views worldwide about how to integrate indigenous perspectives into development projects and programmes contribute to the confusion.

68. Awareness-building efforts need to concentrate on normative instruments as well. For example, indigenous and other peoples are often cited in documents such as the aforementioned Right to Food Guidelines or the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, but there is little understanding among FAO staff on how this can be made operational or how to articulate the tangible benefits to stakeholders. Indigenous peoples would also benefit from greater understanding of such instruments. Although they are extremely knowledgeable about their own development concerns, they are often less aware of the existence, meaning, and/or practical applicability of treaties, conventions and other legal or technical documents.

69. International treaties and declarations require a parallel effort. In that regard, the principles and rights set forth in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples should be mainstreamed into the different sectors of the FAO mandate, in particular when providing legal advisory services to Governments and supporting the development of policies, national strategies or programmes. This implies the engagement of indigenous peoples in the implementation of FAO policy mechanisms, as appropriate, and FAO compliance with the preambular paragraph of the Declaration, which emphasizes that the United Nations has an important role in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples.

70. If access to FAO is not possible through the relevant national authority because of political differences of any kind, some alternative options exist which support the participation and contribution of non-governmental stakeholders. The Civil Society Liaison Office of the Organization provides one viable entry point. With this support, indigenous peoples' networks are increasingly participating in FAO policy dialogue processes at both global and regional levels. For example, FAO has been consistently including Latin American indigenous peoples organizations in panel discussions at the World Summit on Food Security, FAO regional conferences, the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the Committee on World Food Security, and others. This has been partly done through the international mechanism of the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee.[8]

71. A new FAO strategy for working more effectively with civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations is currently being developed. The forthcoming strategy for the private sector may also offer possible channels of participation. Indigenous peoples may find it useful to approach either of these two forms of cooperation in order to increase their visibility within FAO and to keep informed about how the Organization maintains relationships with its stakeholders and partners in development. Information on how to participate in these processes is available upon request.

[8] The International NGO/CSO Planning Committee (IPC) is a global network of non-governmental and civil society organizations concerned with food sovereignty issues and programmes. It was established in 2000 in anticipation of the World Food Summit: Five years later, but its origins can be traced to processes which took place in the 1990s.

IV. Opportunities for the future

72. The engagement of FAO with indigenous peoples is in continuous evolution. Various institutional and organizational factors have hindered the development of a systematic approach, and yet, work with indigenous peoples does occur and is increasingly evident. In fact, despite these institutional challenges, many officers within FAO are committed to indigenous issues and work to create greater awareness and progress.

73. The Declaration signed in 2007 offers a unique opportunity to advocate for greater action, and it will be used within FAO to pursue positive change. The formulation of an FAO policy on indigenous peoples is in part a direct response to the Declaration and promises improved FAO engagement. The draft policy will soon be disseminated to members of the Inter-Agency Support Group and to some indigenous peoples' organizations for their important input and review before it is sent to senior management at FAO for approval. In essence, FAO policy is expected to provide a critical impetus in implementing the 2007 Declaration and strengthening the relevance and benefits of its work for indigenous populations.

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Eighth session
New York, 18-29 May 2009
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations agencies and funds

Information received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations

Report of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Summary

The present report contains information provided by six divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs: the Division for the Advancement of Women; the Division for Sustainable Development; the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests; the Statistics Division; the Division for Public Administration and Development Management; and the Division for Social Policy and Development, in particular the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Each Division has highlighted its activities in relation to indigenous peoples' issues and this information is expected to provide the basis for the in-depth dialogue due to take place during the eighth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

* E/C.19/2009/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report contains contributions from six divisions of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It is expected that this information will form the basis for the in-depth dialogue at the eighth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The United Nations development agenda defines the core objectives of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The substantive focus of the Department's work spans most of the agenda's basic elements: gender equality issues and advancement of women, social policy and development, population, sustainable development, sustainable forest management, development policy and analysis, financing for development, public administration and development management, and statistics.

2. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides substantive support to the key intergovernmental mechanisms to promote accountability for and monitoring of the agenda's implementation. It supports fundamental processes that underpin development efforts worldwide, such as economic forecasting, the global statistical system and the production of population estimates and projections, and has significant responsibilities in promoting United Nations system-wide coherence and coordination, including as convener of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. The Department also produces a broad range of analytical products and policy advice that serve as valuable sources of reference and decision-making tools for policy formulation and capacity development in many countries, both developed and developing. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs is also the Coordinator for the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

II. Division for the Advancement of Women

3. The Division for the Advancement of Women provides support to United Nations intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, in relation to their work on gender equality and the advancement of women. It supports the development and implementation by Governments and other stakeholders of policies for the achievement of equality between women and men and enjoyment by women of all of their human rights. It prepares reports and policy options and identifies emerging trends and good practices. The Division advocates the improvement of the status of women in all areas of their lives, including as beneficiaries of sustainable development, human rights, peace and security.

Women 2000 and beyond: rural women in a changing world: opportunities and challenges

4. This publication was launched on the International Day of Rural Women (15 October 2008) and includes consideration of the situation of indigenous women. It highlights the attention given to these groups of women in the United Nations intergovernmental processes, the issues raised, such as the multiple forms of discrimination faced by rural indigenous women, and recommendations made by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues concerning indigenous women. The publication describes activities by United Nations entities, including a project aimed at harnessing the local knowledge of indigenous women to strengthen

agriculture and rural development. In discussing rural poverty, the publication calls for attention to the priorities and needs of specific groups of rural women, such as indigenous women.

International Day of Rural Women

5. On the first observance of the International Day of Rural Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women co-sponsored a panel discussion with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Speakers highlighted the valuable contributions of rural women to agriculture and development, and paid particular attention to the role of indigenous women. They emphasized the need to better reflect the fundamental rights of indigenous women in policies, plans and institutional arrangements, and for greater attention to their rights to land and natural resources, and food sovereignty.

World survey on the role of women in development

6. The Division for the Advancement of Women is in the process of preparing the 2009 world survey on the role of women in development, which will cover the issue of women's control over economic resources and access to financial resources, including microfinance. The survey is scheduled to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. The situation of indigenous women has been raised at preparatory events.

Fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women — expert panel on gender perspectives on climate change

7. At its fifty-second session, from 25 February to 7 March 2008, the Commission on the Status of Women convened an interactive expert panel to examine the emerging issue of gender perspectives on climate change. Anastasia Pinto, an indigenous woman of the Meitei nation in India, was one of the panellists. Speakers highlighted the need to include indigenous peoples, women and other groups in climate-related decision-making. In discussing the gender-specific impacts of climate change, participants noted that indigenous women were especially susceptible to the negative impact of natural disasters.

Follow-up to recommendations of the Permanent Forum

8. The Division for the Advancement of Women endeavours to integrate attention to the situation of indigenous women in all areas of its work. Some of these particular areas are summarized below.

Commission on the Status of Women

9. The Commission on the Status of Women, primarily in its work on follow-up to, and implementation of, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, continues to address the situation of indigenous women in relation to priority themes, emerging issues and review themes, as well as in relation to particular resolutions. The Division for the Advancement of Women continues to identify opportunities for the participation of experts on indigenous women in panels and side events related to sessions of the Commission.

Events related to the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women

10. At the Commission's fifty-first session, from 26 February to 9 March 2007, the situation of indigenous girls was addressed in a high-level round table on the priority theme, "the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child". The situation of indigenous women was addressed in an interactive expert panel on the emerging issue, elimination of all forms of violence against women: follow-up to the Secretary-General's in-depth study at the national and international levels.

11. At the fiftieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in 2006, Noeli Pocaterra, President of the Permanent Commission of Indigenous Peoples National Assembly, Venezuela, was a speaker on a panel convened to celebrate International Women's Day (8 March 2006). Several side events held during the session dealt with indigenous women, including on violence against indigenous women, co-sponsored by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, MADRE (an international human rights organization focusing on women's rights) and the International Indigenous Women's Forum.

12. At the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in 2005, 60 indigenous women from different parts of the world attended. They participated in eight side events and two press conferences, among other activities. The Division for the Advancement of Women collaborated with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in the organization of a panel discussion to review progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action from an indigenous perspective. Panellists included Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, member of the Permanent Forum, Lucy Mulenkei, African Indigenous Women's Organization — Indigenous Information Network, Tarcila Rivera, CHIRAPAQ, Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú, Stella Tamang, South Asia Indigenous Women's Forum, and Beverly Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada. The situation of indigenous women was also highlighted in a panel discussion that addressed the linkages between the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration (progress, gaps and challenges) and in a panel discussion on future perspectives on the promotion of gender equality: through the eyes of young women and men.

Participation of Chairpersons

13. The Chairpersons of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum have participated in the sessions of their respective bodies. For example, Merike Kokajev, speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum addressed the fifty-first session of the Commission in February 2007. The Chairperson of the Commission, Ambassador Carmen María Gallardo, addressed the Permanent Forum at its fifth session in May 2006.

Reports

14. The Division for the Advancement of Women continues to address, as appropriate, the situation of indigenous women in reports it prepares for the Commission on the Status of Women. A questionnaire that served to compile information from Governments for the 10-year review and appraisal of the

implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the forty-ninth session of the Commission in 2005 requested Governments to include information on actions implemented to address the situation of indigenous women. As a result, 24 Governments provided information on indigenous women, specifically on the Government's measures, actions and policies aimed at improving the status of indigenous women and on the obstacles and challenges with respect to eliminating discrimination against indigenous women and overcoming their social and economic exclusion. The report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Commission summarized these efforts (E/CN.6/2005/2, paras. 572-595). Several other recent reports prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women included some information on the situation of indigenous women and girls, such as a report on progress in mainstreaming gender perspectives in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (E/CN.6/2007/3), and the economic advancement for women (E/CN.6/2006/7).

Resolutions

15. At its forty-ninth session, from 28 February to 11 March 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted resolution 49/7 on indigenous women beyond the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The situation of indigenous women was also highlighted in resolution 49/2 on eliminating demand for trafficked women and girls for all forms of exploitation.

Work of the Division for the Advancement of Women on violence against women

16. The Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women,[1] prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women and presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, also discusses violence against indigenous women. The International Indigenous Women's Forum, associated with MADRE, was an active member of the task force set up by the Division to support the preparation of the study.

17. The non-governmental organization report entitled *Mairin Iwanka Raya, Indigenous Women Stand against Violence* was issued as a companion to the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women. In October 2006, a panel discussion was organized by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, MADRE and the International Indigenous Women's Forum to present the report, and a staff member of the Division for the Advancement of Women participated in the panel discussion.

Inter-agency cooperation and coordination

18. The Division for the Advancement of Women continues to participate and contribute to two task forces, namely the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)/Task Force on Indigenous Women and the Intra-Departmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. As part of the Intra-Departmental Task Force, the Division prepared a plan to implement the Second International Decade of the World's

[1] A/61/122/Add.1.

Indigenous People, as a component of the Department's Plan of Action for the Decade. As part of the IANWGE Task Force, the Division contributed to an inventory of mandates, an overview of programmes and activities focusing on indigenous women that have been carried out, and a strategy and workplan to mainstream indigenous women's issues in the work of the United Nations.

United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality

19. The Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women was a member of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality. The report of the Task Force, entitled *Taking action: achieving gender equality and empowering women*, addressed the situation of indigenous women and girls, in particular in connection with the need to strengthen opportunities for education.

Women 2000 and beyond: gender equality and empowerment of women through information and communications technologies

20. This publication of the Division for the Advancement of Women, issued in September 2005, also covers the use of information and communications technology for the empowerment of indigenous women.

Work on rural women

21. The Division for the Advancement of Women continues to work on the issue of rural women, including indigenous women, in the context of the General Assembly (see para. 4 above). It has addressed the situation of indigenous women in reports to the Assembly on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas. For example, the report of 2007[2] recommended that steps be taken to promote consultations with, and participation of, rural women, including indigenous women, through their organizations and networks, in the design, development and implementation of gender equality and rural development interventions.

Obstacles

22. The Division for the Advancement of Women endeavours to highlight, whenever possible, the situation of indigenous women in relation to particular issues or topics, in response to intergovernmental mandates. However, the capacities and resources of the Division to work specifically on the situation of indigenous women are limited. Information requested by the Division from different stakeholders, including Member States and entities of the United Nations system, for preparation of reports of the Secretary-General rarely focus on the situation of indigenous women.

Facilitating factors

23. Existing general mandates in resolutions, agreements and other outcomes of intergovernmental bodies on gender equality and empowerment of women provide the basis for the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women in this area. The Division also benefits from collaboration with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum.

[2] A/62/202.

Policies

24. The Division for the Advancement of Women does not have a specific policy or budgetary allocation on indigenous peoples' issues. With regard to activities on indigenous women, see the relevant information above.

Capacity-building

25. The Division for the Advancement of Women has not implemented a training or capacity-building programme for staff on indigenous peoples' issues. Staff members have the opportunity to apply for training in particular areas, as part of the Department's staff development programme.

Focal point

26. The focal point for the Division for the Advancement of Women is as follows:

Janette Amer
Women's Rights Section
Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DC2-1236

Upcoming events

27. The Division for the Advancement of Women will continue to identify opportunities for the participation of experts on indigenous women in panels, meetings and other events that it organizes. The Division is seeking to organize, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, a side event in connection with the eighth session of the Permanent Forum.

III. Division for Sustainable Development

28. In response to the recommendations made by the Permanent Forum at its seventh session addressed specifically to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (E/2008/43, para. 73), the Division for Sustainable Development has continued to strengthen and support the existing mechanisms that provide a platform for indigenous local-local cooperation and the establishment of a network of indigenous local governments for information exchange and capacity-building. The Division has also collaborated closely with other Department of Economic and Social Affairs colleagues to develop, fund and launch the Department's Integrated Civil Society Organizations (iCSO) System[3] to facilitate interactions among civil society organizations and the Department at all levels. The iCSO System is an online database that includes all non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, is also open to any interested civil society organizations that wish to provide information and can serve as a potential tool for collaboration and networking among civil society organizations at all levels. Indigenous peoples' organizations and other non-governmental organizations working with, and for, indigenous and local communities can be selected as search

[3] http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do.

fields and identified based on location, regional scope, areas of activity and other data.[4]

29. Data and indicators on indigenous peoples at the national level are available through the Division's national reporting mechanism[5] and through the compendium of country-by-country profiles developed by the Workers and Trade Unions Major Group sector.[6] The Division also maintains a web page dedicated to indigenous peoples as one of the nine major groups' sectors identified in Agenda 21.[7]

30. Supporting this, as well as numerous other recommendations made by the Permanent Forum at its seventh session,[8] the Division for Sustainable Development hosted a side event during that session to promote and inform indigenous groups about opportunities for involvement in the Commission on Sustainable Development process. The Division has also encouraged and facilitated active contributions by indigenous peoples' organizations to the work of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York from 5 to 16 May 2008, and the seventeenth session, comprised of an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, held from 23 to 27 February 2009, and the session itself, held from 4 to 15 May 2009. The Commission on Sustainable Development cycle (sixteenth and seventeenth sessions), addresses progress in implementing sustainable development commitments outlined in Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Mauritius Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[9] in relation to agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.[10]

31. For the sixteenth session (review year), indigenous peoples' groups submitted written inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General, produced examples of case studies to be included in the Commission on Sustainable Development matrix and the sustainable development case studies database, and prepared an official discussion paper[11] through the coordination of a steering group of indigenous organizations led by the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba) and the Indigenous Environmental Network. Furthermore, a special study on indigenous peoples in Africa[12] in relation to the Commission on Sustainable Development agenda was prepared and submitted by the steering group. Indigenous peoples' organizations also participated in the activities of the sixteenth session itself of the Commission on Sustainable Development, including two dedicated major groups' multi-stakeholder dialogue sessions, one high-level dialogue session with major groups and ministers, thematic panel discussions, regional discussions, and small island developing States day

[4] This can also be considered a response to the Permanent Forum recommendation contained in E/2008/43, para. 65.

[5] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm.

[6] http://www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles/profiles.php?ID=0&Lang=ENG.

[7] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/mgroups/about_mgroups/amg_indigenous_main.htm.

[8] Other Permanent Forum recommendations relevant to the work of the Division for Sustainable Development are found in E/2008/43, paras. 9, 11, 23, 27, 30, 33, 53, 65, 69, 118, 128, 135 and 148.

[9] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendation contained in E/2008/43, para. 53.

[10] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendation contained in E/2008/43, para. 33.

[11] The indigenous peoples' discussion paper is made available in all United Nations languages at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/docs_sdissues_major_groups.htm#CSD-16.

[12] Indigenous briefs available at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/mg/ipafrica.pdf.

discussions, statements made during the closing plenary,[13] and participation in the Partnerships Fair, the Learning Centre and side events.

32. During the seventeenth session (policy year) in 2009, indigenous peoples have actively collaborated with other major groups' sectors in outlining their priorities for action,[14] are participating in several high-level intersessional meetings and will be participating in the official meetings through similar entry points outlined above for the sixteenth session of the Commission.

33. The discussions during the two-year cycle of the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development (which will end on 15 May 2009) have already been shaped by the strength of indigenous peoples' views and inputs. The summary of the Chairman of the sixteenth session includes explicit references to indigenous peoples in 20 separate paragraphs[15] that address issues important to current and past recommendations of the Permanent Forum, including: the need for access to land and secure land tenure, especially for women;[16] the importance of local and traditional knowledge in agriculture, integrated water resources management, drought and desertification adaptation and mitigation; the need to support capacity-building for local communities and indigenous peoples according to the Bali Strategic Plan;[17] and promotion of small-scale traditional agriculture and sustainable livestock production. The Chairman also stated that implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples would further efforts to achieve sustainable development goals.[18]

34. Apart from the Commission on Sustainable Development process, the Division for Sustainable Development also supports indigenous peoples' active involvement in the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production,[19] and recognizes 19 multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development that are currently working with and/or for indigenous communities at the local, regional and global levels to address issues related to water, agricultural heritage, land, biodiversity protection and biotrade development. Representatives of the Division participate regularly in the Permanent Forum Inter-Agency Support Group,[20] and participated in a Non-Governmental Liaison Service Working Seminar on the United Nations and People's Organizations, held on 3 and 4 November 2008. The Division for Sustainable Development has also contributed its expertise and experience in the Service's study on engaging social/peoples' organizations and movements: an essential step towards enhanced legitimacy of the United Nations global governance processes, to be issued in the spring of 2009.

35. Recognizing the special needs of Africa, the Division for Sustainable Development is also undertaking measures to establish a long-term programme for Africa that will be implemented in close cooperation and coordination with other

[13] Statements can be found at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/mgroups/about_mgroups/amg_indigenous_main.htm.

[14] See advance unedited text at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd17/mg/mg_csd17_docs.pdf.

[15] E/2008/29, chap. II.D, part one, paras. 49, 65, 82, 85, 87, 89, 102, 107, 124, 136, 153, 154, 170, 200, 242, 243 and 245 and part two, paras. 255 (q), 255 (gg) and 255 (qq).

[16] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendation contained in E/2008/43, para. 69.

[17] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendations contained in E/2008/43, paras. 11, 23, 27 and 30.

[18] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendations in contained in E/2008/43, para. 128.

[19] http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/.

[20] Response to the Permanent Forum recommendations contained in E/2008/43, para. 135.

development partners and African countries to support the sustainable development of the African continent. The Division collaborates with other United Nations agencies in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, supports capacity-building initiatives for the planning of water-related national strategies and infrastructure developments in the region in line with related Millennium Development Goals. The Division also provides financial support for technical projects currently under way in the Africa region under NEPAD, addressing international partnerships for new and emerging technologies for sustainable development in Senegal and Ghana, capacity-building for interregional electricity access and supply in Africa, in the central and east subregions, and strengthening national capacity for the integration of sustainable development principles into development strategies in countries emerging from conflict, which also involves the Asia and the Pacific region.

36. Since its inception in 1993, the Commission on Sustainable Development has maintained its policy to include indigenous peoples' issues and organizations in its work as part of Agenda 21 follow-up, and the Major Groups Programme provides the focus within the Division for Sustainable Development for these activities. While there are no budgetary allocations specifically tagged for indigenous peoples' issues, as mentioned earlier, there is a small amount of funding set aside each year to enable indigenous peoples to participate in Commission-related processes.

37. The Division does not currently have regular or ad hoc capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples' issues for staff. However, capacity-building activities in this area are generally incorporated into the usual programmatic activities related to major groups, including intersessional meetings, regional meetings, capacity-building workshops and regular conference calls with major groups' organizing partners, and ad hoc meetings organized by major groups active in the Commission on Sustainable Development process. As previously mentioned, there are also three technical cooperation projects under way in the Africa region that potentially address indigenous peoples' issues, as well as 19 partnerships for sustainable development working for, or with, indigenous communities.

Obstacles and facilitating factors in implementation

38. The obstacles that the Division for Sustainable Development faces in implementing the many relevant recommendations made by the Permanent Forum are primarily related to the limited funding for the support of programmes and projects specific to indigenous peoples, although it makes available limited funding to indigenous people and other major groups' participants from developing countries to enable their participation in Commission on Sustainable Development-related meetings. On average, two to four representatives nominated by the indigenous peoples' sector are funded annually to participate in regional, intersessional and Commission meetings.

39. Factors that facilitate and enable the Division for Sustainable Development to implement the Permanent Forum's recommendations include the strength and innovative nature of the Major Groups Programme, whose mandate and goals include enhancing the participation and effective involvement of major groups (including indigenous peoples) in Agenda 21 and Johannesburg Plan of

Implementation follow-up[21] and implementation processes and in the Mauritius Strategy for small island developing States, and continuing to provide for more direct and substantive involvement of major groups (including indigenous peoples) in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development.[22] Furthermore, the Division and the Permanent Forum share similar mandated issue areas, most notably in economic and social development and the environment (defined as the three pillars of sustainable development) as well as education and health, which are both cross-cutting issues for every cycle of the Commission. This makes the nature and aims of the work of the Division and the Permanent Forum very similar, enabling the Division to address many areas of relevance and importance for the Permanent Forum.

Focal points

40. Indigenous issues are normally channelled by the Division for Sustainable Development through the Major Groups Programme Coordinator and the Major Groups Programme Officer. Contact information is as follows:

Federica Pietracci, Major Groups Programme Coordinator
Communication and Outreach Branch
Division for Sustainable Development/United Nations-Department
of Economic and Social Affairs

and

Tonya Vaturi, Major Groups Programme Officer
Global Policy Branch
Division for Sustainable Development/United Nations-Department
of Economic and Social Affairs

Relevant meetings

41. Below is a list of recent and future conferences and other meetings that include indigenous issues.

42. *Expert Group Meeting on Climate Change and Sustainable Development: The Role of Indicators, New York, 15-16 October 2008.*[23] This workshop was organized by the Division for Sustainable Development. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss ways for countries to better harness linkages between sustainable development indicators and climate change policy, thereby helping countries to operationalize the fact that climate change is a sustainable development issue. The meeting reviewed national and international experiences on indicators and on information needs for climate change policy. It also fostered a dialogue among different sets of actors in this area.

43. *Capacity Development Workshop on Improving Agricultural Productivity, Water Use Efficiency and Strengthening Rural Livelihoods, Bangkok, 28-30 January 2009.*[24] This workshop was organized by the Division for Sustainable Development in collaboration with the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. It brought

[21] Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, paragraph 139(g).
[22] Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, paragraph 149(b).
[23] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/15Oct_2008/egm.htm.
[24] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/calendar/work_bkk09.htm.

together senior Government policymakers, representatives of local authorities, officials from the United Nations system, researchers and experts, as well as practitioners, to share lessons learned and best practices in combating rural poverty.

44. *African Agriculture in the twenty-first Century: Meeting the Challenges, Making a Sustainable Green Revolution, Windhoek, 9-10 February 2009*.[25] This high-level meeting was co-organized by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Government of Namibia and the Division for Sustainable Development. As an intersessional ministerial-level meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development, it considered how African Governments and other stakeholders can meet challenges and take forceful policy and practical measures, in cooperation with the international community and development partners, to revitalize African agriculture and the broader rural economies in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

45. *Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, New York, 23-27 February 2009*.[26] This meeting built upon the review session of the sixteenth session and lay the groundwork for the policy session of the seventeenth session, with the main outcome being the production of a draft negotiating text for the seventeenth session.

46. *Seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, New York, 4-15 May 2009*.[27] As the policy session of the implementation cycle of the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions, the Commission at its seventeenth session will negotiate decisions related to the thematic issues of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

IV. Division for Social Policy and Development

47. The Division for Social Policy and Development is part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The Division seeks to strengthen international cooperation for social development, in particular in the areas of poverty eradication, productive employment and decent work, and the social inclusion of older persons, youth, family, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, persons in situations of conflict and other groups or persons marginalized from society and development.

Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

48. The work of the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues continues to expand, within the very broad mandate of the Permanent Forum, namely economic and social development, environment, health, education, culture and human rights. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum assists the Permanent Forum to carry out its mandate by (a) making policy recommendations to the United Nations system, (b) promoting the integration and coordination of indigenous issues

[25] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/africa/events/index.htm.
[26] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm.
[27] Ibid.

in the United Nations system, (c) raising awareness about indigenous issues and (d) producing relevant material.

49. The expansion of the work of the Permanent Forum includes its new role under article 42 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, whereby the Permanent Forum is expected to promote respect for, and full application of the provisions of the Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of the Declaration. Other areas of work include the small grants programme under the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People[28] and additional Permanent Forum meetings and expert group meetings hosted by Member States, in support of the Forum's recommendations. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and Permanent Forum members also participate in major intergovernmental conferences, undertake capacity-building activities and promote media awareness of indigenous peoples' issues.

50. This section of the report should be read in conjunction with the note by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on reports received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations (E/CN.19/2009/10), and the analysis reports on agenda items 3 (a) (E/CN.19/2009/7), 3 (b) (E/CN.19/2009/8) and 3 (c) (E/CN.19/2009/9).

Indigenous children and youth

51. Following a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its seventh session, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum has been working closely with the Youth Section in the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in order to facilitate the participation of the Indigenous Youth Caucus at the eighth session. The Secretariat is also supporting the United Nations Programme on Youth in the preparation of the World Youth Report 2008, which includes a chapter on indigenous youth and climate change.

52. In cooperation with UNICEF and the World Health Organization and in response to Permanent Forum recommendations, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum is working towards a workshop on the prevention of indigenous youth suicide. The workshop will take place in late 2009 and will bring together experts on the subject from various regions, with a view to taking stock of existing experiences, including policies and strategies, to distil good practices and make recommendations about how best to move forward on this important issue.

Indigenous women

53. Since 2005, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum has been working in cooperation with other United Nations bodies and indigenous women's organizations to implement the United Nations Development Account project, entitled Engaging indigenous women: local government capacity-building through new technologies in Latin America. The details of this project are outlined in paragraph 60 below.

[28] While an extrabudgetary post is now devoted to this, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues dedicates part of the staff time of four other staff to this task, which is extremely labour intensive, placing almost untenable pressure on staff.

54. During 2008, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum contributed to a number of United Nations reports on the status of women, including a report to the Security Council regarding the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security,[29] and reports to the General Assembly regarding the implementation of resolution 61/143 on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women,[30] and resolution 62/134 (2007) on eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations.[31] Members of the Permanent Forum also participated in a number of key international meetings addressing indigenous women, including the ninth International Meeting on Gender Statistics held in Aguascalientes, Mexico, in October 2008, convened by the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Encuentro Internacional "Mujeres Indígenas y Justicia Ancestral", convened by UNIFEM, held in Quito in October 2008.

55. Under the trust fund for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a number of the projects selected for funding in 2008 focused specifically on the situation of indigenous women: projects in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo sought to reduce violence against indigenous women; a project in Bolivia focused on the empowerment of indigenous women; and a project in Nepal sought to disseminate United Nations instruments on the human rights of indigenous peoples to the indigenous women of Nepal.

Disability

56. The entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on 3 May 2008[32] marked a milestone in global work towards promoting and securing the rights of persons living with disabilities. Combined with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, especially article 22, which lays down that particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the Declaration, there is already a strong framework for addressing the social, physical, health and general development issues facing indigenous persons with disabilities. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum will work with the Disability Unit of the Division for Social Policy and Development towards strengthening its policy focus on this issue.

57. The second phase of the global survey on Government action on the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities revealed that the three regions in the world with the highest number of indigenous peoples are also the regions with the lowest rate of implementation of the Standard Rules. The survey does not present disaggregated data regarding indigenous peoples, but as a traditionally marginalized group, it can be assumed that indigenous peoples in these regions are strongly affected. Coordination between the relevant United Nations agencies will be promoted by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and the Disability Unit to address this alarming issue.

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[29] S/2008/622.

[30] A/63/214.

[31] A/63/216.

[32] Adopted by the General Assembly in December 2006 in its resolution 61/106.

Millennium Development Goals

58. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum has carried out comprehensive desk reviews of national Millennium Development Goals country reports for three years. The reviews have constantly underscored the importance of the recommendations of the 2005 and 2006 sessions of the Permanent Forum, which undertook a specific examination of the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples and highlighted elements for their greater inclusion. The conclusions of the reviews have centred upon inclusion of indigenous peoples in the development of Millennium Development Goals reports and other Millennium Development Goals monitoring processes, improved disaggregating of data, and free, prior and informed consent for all Millennium Development Goals interventions involving indigenous peoples.

59. The recommendations of the Permanent Forum on the Millennium Development Goals, together with the conclusions from the desk reviews, have provided the basis for a chapter on indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals in the Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, as well as a section on the subject in the training module on indigenous peoples' issues for United Nations staff, issued by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum in 2008.

Development Account

60. The Development Account project, entitled Engaging indigenous women: local-government capacity-building through new technologies in Latin America, is being implemented by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum in cooperation with indigenous peoples' organizations and local authorities in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. In 2008, assessments on the communicational situation of indigenous women in each country were completed in addition to a review of existing content that addresses indigenous women's issues. These documents were considered at three workshops, held in Lima in April, Latacunga, Ecuador, in May and La Paz in June 2008. All three workshops were attended by indigenous women, representatives from Governments and colleagues from the United Nations country teams. Based on the principle of free, prior and informed consent, participants at the workshops considered the preparatory documents mentioned above and reached a consensus on the activities for the project. Following the workshops, each of the cooperating indigenous organizations developed a plan of action for the production of communicational material for indigenous women, which will be produced in 2009. Further information, including the assessments and reports of the workshops, is available on the website of the Permanent Forum.[33]

Climate change

61. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs views climate change as a pressing sustainable development challenge that should be linked more firmly to the broader United Nations development agenda, including to more socially inclusive but less carbon-intensive economic growth and to other internationally agreed development goals. The Department is of the view that many sectors may be involved, such as finance, energy, transport, agriculture and health. This cross-cutting approach informs the Department's normative and policy support, analytical work and capacity development at the country level. The Department is

[33] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/dev_acct.html.

able to coordinate climate change issues because it services the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. It is also active in assisting Governments, including in small island developing States, to increase capacities to design and implement national development strategies, as called for by the 2005 World Summit, including national sustainable development strategies that incorporate climate change.[34]

62. Climate change continues to remain an urgent issue for indigenous peoples. It aggravates the existing living conditions of indigenous peoples to the point where their basic rights are in jeopardy. Indigenous peoples' rights are already violated owing to their political and economic marginalization and loss of land and resources. The theme for the seventh session of the Permanent Forum, climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges, highlighted the difficulties that indigenous peoples are confronting in obtaining a role in the climate change debate. Many of the issues raised included the lack of access to technology, lack of policies for indigenous peoples who will have to migrate from their lands, regions and countries because of the effects of climate change, the lack of consultation and the lack of free, prior and informed consent of programmes, such as the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation in Developing Countries and the clean development mechanism, developed to mitigate climate change. All these issues remain a major area of contention for indigenous peoples.

63. Indigenous peoples are keen to be included in the Copenhagen negotiations in 2009, where it is expected there will be an agreement between parties on a Copenhagen protocol to prevent global warming and climate change. Unlike the international Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change does not formally recognize the impact of climate change on indigenous peoples. In its Bali Action Plan of 2007, there was some recognition that the needs of local and indigenous communities must be addressed when actions are taken to reduce emissions from deforestation and soil degradation. However, policy action is still required so that indigenous peoples will have a voice within the international climate change process other than attending official proceedings, organizing side events and meeting with chairmen of the negotiation bodies.

64. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has claimed that 2009 is the year of climate change because of the need to reach agreement by December 2009 in Copenhagen, as agreed by all Member States of the United Nations, and because the economic crisis can only be truly solved if new approaches on climate and energy pave the way. He has also confirmed that he is planning a high-level event with Heads of State and Government during the General Assembly meeting in September 2009, and was consulting with countries about the possibility of convening another high-level summit meeting in the months ahead. Where possible, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum plans to promote indigenous peoples' issues at these high-level events on climate change. It also promoted the Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change, held at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage, Alaska, United States of America, from 20 to 24 April 2009.

[34] http://www.un.org/climatechange/pdfs/bali/desa-bali07-16.pdf

Promotion and awareness-raising

65. In its promotion and awareness-raising efforts, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum takes advantage of its location at United Nations Headquarters by working closely with the United Nations Department of Public Information, reaching out to media, civil society and Member States throughout the year. An integral aspect of the Secretariat's promotional activities is through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and the United Nations Development Group. The Secretariat disseminates its desk reviews of selected common country assessments and United Nations development assistance frameworks as well as Millennium Development Goals country reports. It continues to maintain and update a website in English, French, Spanish and Russian, publish the *Message Stick* newsletter and organize annual commemorations of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People. In 2008 the Secretariat, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information issued printed booklets of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and a brochure on the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People in all six official languages. Preparations for the publication of the *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* are ongoing.

V. Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests

66. In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2000/35, established the United Nations Forum on Forests. Its main objective is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment based on the Rio Declaration, the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, and other key milestones of international forest policy. The Forum has universal membership and is composed of all States Members of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

67. The United Nations Forum on Forests duly recognizes the vital role of indigenous peoples in achieving sustainable forest management. The links between the health and vitality of forests and that of the indigenous communities that live in and near forests have been recognized and highlighted repeatedly. At the same time, the cultural, spiritual and economic importance of forests for indigenous communities is undeniable.

68. The indigenous peoples major group, as one of the nine major groups recognized by Agenda 21, has actively participated in Forum sessions and Forum-related meetings. At the last session of the Forum, in April 2007, representatives from indigenous peoples networks actively contributed to deliberations and participated in the multi-stakeholder dialogue sessions, highlighting international human rights and the rights of local forest-dependent peoples, stressing underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and weak forest governance issues. The indigenous peoples major group has emphasized the vital role that indigenous peoples play in sustainable development, the cultural and spiritual importance of forests and interconnections between indigenous communities and their natural environments.

69. The United Nations Forum on Forests will address economic and social development issues at its ninth and tenth sessions. The overall themes of these sessions are forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication, and forests and economic development. In addition, at the fourth session of the Forum, the Chairman's summary of the multi-stakeholder dialogue included the following statement:

> "The need to promote capacity-building of indigenous peoples and local communities for the development of culturally appropriate methods of storing and sharing traditional forest-related knowledge was stressed. The recognition of the living nature of such knowledge is essential. Such knowledge should be incorporated into formal education systems and shared through industry training programmes in order to ensure cultural sensitivity as well as preservation and use" (E/2004/42, chap. IV, para. 10, subpara. 12).

70. In 2007, the United Nations Forum on Forests adopted the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, the first-ever intergovernmental instrument on sustainable forest management. The instrument makes several references to indigenous and local communities. In addition, the Forum adopted a multi-year programme of work and in 2011 the theme of the Forum's session will be "forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication". Included is work on social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure.

71. The Indigenous Peoples' Major Group has provided its contribution as a group report for the multi-stakeholder dialogue. The Group also provided its views on possible financing mechanisms for sustainable forest management.

72. The United Nations Forum on Forests allocates substantial staff time on indigenous issues, especially through work and cooperation with the focal points of the Major Groups, including indigenous peoples. The Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests considers its ongoing cooperation and information-sharing activities with focal points from indigenous peoples' groups to be a capacity-building activity.

73. The United Nations Forum on Forests focal point for the Major Groups, including indigenous peoples is:

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

74. The upcoming eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests will take place in New York from 20 April to 1 May 2009. Representatives from the Indigenous Peoples' Major Group are expected to contribute and participate in this session. The discussions will focus on two main themes: "forests in a changing environment" (including desertification, forest degradation, climate change, biodiversity); and "means of implementation for sustainable forest management" (including financing for sustainable forest management). All of these issues are very relevant to forest-dependent indigenous communities. In addition, the session will

include a multi-stakeholder dialogue, during which Major Groups will present their views and recommendations on the issues on the agenda.

75. At its ninth session, in 2011, the Forum will focus on the theme "forests for people, livelihoods and poverty alleviation", and will address issues that are greatly relevant to indigenous issues, including community-based forest management, social development, forest-dependent indigenous and other local communities, including land tenure, and social and cultural aspects of forests. In addition, 2011 will also be the International Year of Forests.

VI. Statistics Division

76. The mandate of the Statistics Division may be summarized into four main areas: developing international statistical standards and methodological guidelines; collecting and disseminating internationally comparable statistics; providing support to national statistical agencies in terms of improving statistical capacity; and servicing the United Nations Statistical Commission as the apex of the international statistical system.

77. In the context of this mandate and the substantive work of the Permanent Forum, the Statistics Division incorporates the indigenous population dimension in all of the aspects of official statistics at the national and international levels, emphasizing the need to capture and disseminate data pertaining to these population groups. More specifically, the United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2*[35] elaborates in detail the need to disaggregate statistics on the basis of ethnocultural characteristics,[36] especially with respect to indigenous peoples. While stressing the need to capture and process statistics on indigenous peoples, this set of recommendations points also to difficulties that are encountered in the process, such as loose national definitions and the absence of an internationally agreed classification of ethnicity.

78. Despite the fact that ethnicity is not a core topic in many national population and housing censuses, the Statistics Division, as part of its series of special topics, collected, processed and disseminated data on ethnocultural characteristics as available in the 2000 census round. This collection is available at the Statistics Division website[37] and it is complemented by the set of actual questions that were used in national censuses to capture these categories.[38]

79. The Statistics Division notes that at its eighth session, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will focus specifically on the issues of indigenous women and it welcomes this discussion in the context of the preparation of the forthcoming issue of *The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics*. It is expected that the issues raised during the discussion of this agenda item will provide solid guidance in terms of identifying relevant and appropriate quantitative measurements (when available) and accompanying statistics.

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[35] *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2* (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.07.XVII.8, United Nations, New York, 2008).

[36] Ibid., paras. 3.111-3.119.

[37] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/popchar/popcharstatistics.htm.

[38] Ibid.

80. In the report of the seventh session of the Permanent Forum, it was recommended that the Statistical Commission advocate for the promotion of indigenous peoples' issues in the 2010 round of population and housing censuses (E/2008/43/, para. 111). Following up on this recommendation, the Statistics Division included this dimension in all of the workshops it conducted related to the 2010 round of population and housing censuses. It has to be emphasized, however, that in a number of national practices the questions on ethnicity are not included in the population and housing census as a consequence of legislative limitations.

81. The Statistics Division continues to implement the recommendations regarding the importance of disaggregating data by ethnic characteristics, with special emphasis on indigenous populations, through methodological guidance that is not limited to population and housing censuses, but encompasses other sources of statistics as well, such as civil registration and vital statistics. The Statistical Commission may be prompted to reiterate its support for the necessity of capturing and disseminating data on indigenous populations, most likely through gender statistics, in one of the forthcoming sessions.

VII. Division for Public Administration and Development Management

82. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management would like to propose the inclusion of the theme of participatory governance, which focuses on the areas relating to engaging stakeholders in the development agenda that are essential in the sustainable implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Listed below are some of the major initiatives of the Division in the area of participatory governance, in particular as it relates to indigenous issues.

83. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs World Public Sector Report 2008, entitled *People Matter: Civic Engagement in Public Governance*, featured emerging issues, concerns and innovations in civic engagement in public governance, in particular those that contribute to the realization of the United Nations Development Agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. The report highlighted some innovative local government practices, underscoring the experience of the cities of Cotacachi and Otavalo in Ecuador, which are managed by indigenous mayors through a cross-cultural approach.

84. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management also organized a panel discussion on managing indigenous local governments: balancing traditions with emerging challenge, in partnership with the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, on 23 April 2008. The panel was held in the context of the seventh session of the Permanent Forum. More than 70 participants representing Member States, Governments, academia and civil society organizations attended the panel.

85. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management also supported the United Nations development assistance framework in Ecuador. It provided inputs to the Cross-Cultural Task Force, which seeks to promote indigenous issues in that country. These inputs were designed as an operational contribution to the current National Development Plan being concluded with support from the United Nations.

VIII. Conclusion

86. The divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs mentioned above focus their activities on indigenous peoples' issues, policies and strategies to achieve the goal of social justice through specific measures that promote poverty eradication and gender equality, and that foster social inclusion for social groups, especially youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants and indigenous peoples. They also promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, agriculture, rural development, land and other areas through technical cooperation and capacity-building. The Department's policies seek to reduce inequalities, promote access to basic social services and increase the participation and integration of social groups such as indigenous peoples in all areas of their mandates.

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations agencies and funds

Information received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations

United Nations Development Programme**

Summary

The present report highlights United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) initiatives and activities undertaken in 2008 concerning indigenous peoples, with a special focus on themes and programmes. UNDP engagement with indigenous peoples has received a fresh impetus with the historic adoption on 13 September 2007 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex).

Previously, UNDP initiatives in this area, such as the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme and the UNDP-Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Community-Based Adaptation project, have integrated indigenous peoples issues into their efforts based on past recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The UNDP *Human Development Report 2007/2008* recommends that, in addressing climate change, governance structures for overseeing shared goals have to extend beyond conservation and emissions targets to environmental and human development concerns, including respect for the human rights of indigenous peoples. Since issuance of the report, the UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development in Asia and the Pacific has organized global, regional and community dialogues in 2008.

* E/C.19/2009/1.

** Submission of the present report was delayed in order to ensure the inclusion of the most recent information.

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In 2008, UNDP continued to support the establishment of participatory mechanisms for indigenous peoples, such as the GEF Small Grants Programme and the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Council to the United Nations country team in Bolivia. UNDP is collaborating closely with the United Nations system through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Indigenous Issues to mainstream indigenous peoples issues in mechanisms and processes at the country level. UNDP welcomes the guidance of the Permanent Forum, particularly regarding its contribution towards the full realization of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in accordance with articles 41 and 42, thereof.

As follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum, UNDP has established an internal liaison committee to coordinate and maximize efforts in the area of indigenous peoples issues. The new UNDP civil society strategy highlights the important role that UNDP will play in improving participation of groups facing marginalization and exclusion. In this context, UNDP will continue joining forces with other actors and partners to promote the rights of indigenous peoples in the coming years.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the recommendations made by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at its seventh session and at previous sessions. It also provides details of activities, projects and programmes undertaken by UNDP over the past years and in 2008 that are relevant to the work of the Permanent Forum. The report does not aim to provide an exhaustive and complete account of initiatives happening in all countries where UNDP is present, but rather to present an overview that exemplifies the continuous commitment of UNDP to indigenous peoples rights and human development.

2. In April 2008, the Bureau of the Permanent Forum met with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and other UNDP staff members. The discussions focused on how to strengthen the collaboration between UNDP, indigenous peoples and the Permanent Forum. In its 2008 report, the Permanent Forum urged UNDP to strengthen its institutional capacity on indigenous peoples issues by establishing a task force to serve as a liaison mechanism between headquarters and focal points on indigenous issues at the country level. Furthermore, the Forum recommended that those focal points be specialists on indigenous peoples issues (E/2008/43, para. 67).

3. In response, within UNDP, the Partnerships Bureau has established the Indigenous Peoples-UNDP Liaison Committee based at Headquarters in New York and composed of designated focal points from each UNDP practice, regional and substantive bureau. The Liaison Committee will maximize and systematize current efforts to partner with indigenous peoples and provide corporate direction. The Committee will also ensure linkages and provide support to ongoing initiatives, such as the Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development in Asia and the Pacific and a new regional initiative of engagement with indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, a major component of the UNDP Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme. The regional initiative will begin in March 2009 and will serve to establish national processes of dialogue with indigenous peoples and Governments to jointly identify strategies towards the effective implementation of the principles contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

4. The UNDP strategic plan 2008-2011 emphasizes the link between human development, human rights and national ownership by calling for UNDP to support Governments in the identification of effective interventions strengthening participation by the poorest social sectors, as well as by women, youth, persons living with disabilities and indigenous peoples. Support to mobilize civic engagement among those groups is a basic foundation for strengthening their access to the policymaking process. On the occasion of the 2008 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, the UNDP Administrator reaffirmed that UNDP would continue to support efforts to ensure that indigenous voices are heard loudly and clearly, and that they contributed to local, national and global development processes.

II. UNDP global indigenous peoples programmes and initiatives

5. The UNDP *Human Development Report: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*[1] (http:hdr.undp.org/en/-) underlines that international cooperation on climate change alone cannot resolve the wider problems driving deforestation and that the world is losing an opportunity to join climate change mitigation agendas with a range of wider human development benefits. Highlights from UNDP programmes having initiatives that work directly with indigenous peoples to positively impact climate change are set out below.

A. UN-REDD Programme

6. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme) is a collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme. The UN-REDD Programme is aimed at tipping the economic balance in favour of sustainable management of forests so that their formidable economic, environmental and social goods and services benefit countries, communities and forest users while also contributing to important reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

7. On behalf of the UN-REDD Programme, UNDP has undertaken a number of dialogues and consultations with indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities as part of the design phase. In 2008, UNDP led the following dialogues:

(a) During the sixteenth meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development, UNDP, the Wildlife Conservation Society, USAID, the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice and the Fordham Graduate School of Arts and Sciences hosted the "People and the environment" discussion series on the theme "Carbon markets for climate change, conservation and poverty reduction: opportunities and challenges of reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation";

(b) UNDP continued the dialogue on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation between indigenous and local peoples and climate change policymakers over the course of two events: (i) the Community Dorf, held during the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Bonn in May; and (ii) the Community Poble, World Conservation Congress held in Barcelona, Spain, in October, where representatives of national Governments and leaders of indigenous peoples organizations exchanged perspectives on the issue.

8. Throughout the events, technical and conservation experts, representatives of national Governments, the private sector and United Nations agencies discussed the potential benefits and risks associated with projects for indigenous and local peoples on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. At the events, indigenous and local participants voiced concerns about the initiatives, which are summarized below:

[1] Basingstoke, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

(a) The need for access to clear, understandable, accurate and current information on proposed UN-REDD Programmes;

(b) The need for written documentation guaranteeing that indigenous and local peoples will benefit from the UN-REDD Programme;

(c) Uncertainty concerning what mechanism will ensure that indigenous and local peoples are incorporated into the UN-REDD Programme project consultation process;

(d) The need to understand/overcome the cultural disconnect experienced by indigenous and local peoples in terms of placing a monetary value on nature;

(e) Fear that including the issue of avoided deforestation in the Clean Development Mechanism would result in further marginalization since the Mechanism has not resulted in substantial partnerships between development banks, the private sector and indigenous and local peoples;

(f) Skepticism over whether a market mechanism can provide sufficient incentive to protect the interests of communities and to conserve biodiversity;

(g) The need to articulate non-market-based mechanisms for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;

(h) The need for compensation schemes related to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to allow for "retroactive" benefits for indigenous and local communities that have long been protecting forests.

9. In November 2008, the UN-REDD Programme, in partnership with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Tebtebba Foundation and the traditional knowledge initiative of the United Nations University, hosted the Global Indigenous Peoples Consultation on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, held in Baguio City, Philippines (see http://www.un-redd.net/events/GlobalIndigenousPeoplesConsultationonREDD/tabid/551/Default.aspx). The consultation included representatives of indigenous peoples organizations from 18 countries and representatives of United Nations agencies and resulted in the identification of overarching principles and key recommendations to ensure that UN-REDD Programme initiatives were inclusive and beneficial to indigenous peoples. The consultation participants identified the following overarching principles:

(a) The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries should guide a human development approach to all activities on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and on indigenous peoples;

(b) Free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples must be ensured for all activities on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation that may impact on traditional livelihoods/territories;

(c) UN-REDD Programme activities must work through legitimate indigenous authorities, institutions and organizations, ensuring the broad representation of indigenous peoples, including women and youth.

10. In addition to the overarching principles, the participants made a number of recommendations for REDD initiatives targeted at national and global activities.

The recommendations can be found in the summary report of the consultation (available from: http://www.unutki.org/downloads/File/Events/Report_Global_IPs_Consultation_REDD_14Nov08_rev1.pdf).

11. The UN-REDD Programme Policy Board will include a high-level indigenous representative. Policy Board members will set the overall direction for the UN-REDD Programme and approve projects for funding through the UN-REDD Programme Fund. UN-REDD Programme has requested the input of an independent civil society advisory group including representatives of indigenous peoples organizations to provide advice and recommendations on the design and implementation of programme activities.

12. The UN-REDD Programme is also developing a set of guidelines for the engagement of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities, which will be approved in draft form by the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board in March 2009. The guidelines will build on the principles and recommendations made at the Global Indigenous Peoples Consultation on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and will outline the necessary steps that must be taken at the global and national levels to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples are upheld and respected by UN-REDD Programme activities.

B. Global Environmental Facility

13. The Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme, implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership in over 115 countries worldwide, supports innovative approaches to reconciling global environmental priorities with development needs. The Programme does this by working directly with communities, providing grants of up to $50,000 to non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations for projects they design themselves. By encouraging community and country ownership of Programme projects and initiatives, the Programme cultivates sustainable approaches and long-term support for its efforts.

14. At least 15 per cent of Programme projects worldwide are implemented by indigenous peoples organizations and/or in indigenous territories and community conserved areas. Indigenous and community conserved areas are natural sites, resources and species habitats conserved in a voluntary and self-directed way by indigenous peoples and local communities throughout the world. This conservation practice, profoundly intertwined with local strategies for livelihoods and with the spiritual and material values of local cultures, is potentially the oldest on earth. Paradoxically, it is also the least understood and recognized, and in extreme jeopardy today. In this regard, urgent attention has been given by the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme to the development of appropriate participatory mapping techniques (cyber-tracker tools, participatory Geographic Information System, participatory video) for the documentation and protection of the areas through a human development-based approach.

15. During 2008, the GEF Small Grants Programme supported a number of initiatives on indigenous and community conserved areas, in partnership with concerned commissions of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and shared field experiences concerning the areas and community-based adaptation to climate change during international policy forums,

including the second meeting of the ad hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas, held in Rome, in February 2008; a conference on the them "Sustaining cultural and biological diversity in a rapidly changing world: lessons for global policy", held at the American Museum of Natural History, in New York, in April 2008; the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn, in May 2008; and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources World Conservation Congress, held in October 2008.

C. Community-based adaptation

16. Climate change will have a strong and disproportionate impact on the lives and livelihoods of indigenous people. Many indigenous people are directly dependent on climate-sensitive natural resources or live in areas that are vulnerable to climate change impacts. In this regard, a UNDP-GEF Community-Based Adaptation project, implemented by the GEF Small Grants Programme delivery modality, was launched in November 2007 to piloting the community component of the GEF strategic priority on adaptation, in order to build the resilience of communities and the ecosystems upon which they rely in the face of climate change impact. Of the 10 pilot country programmes of the UNDP-GEF Community-Based Adaptation project, Guatemala, Bolivia and Viet Nam will focus strongly on projects targeting climate change risk reduction among indigenous communities, as follows (see www.undp-adaptation.org/project/cba):

(a) In Guatemala, community-based adaptation projects are under development in Kiché and Mam communities, focusing on reducing the increasing risks of landslides and soil erosion in the highland agro ecosystems;

(b) In Viet Nam, projects working towards stabilizing water resources for agricultural purposes in Muong communities, which are facing increasingly erratic rainfall and hydrological regimes, are under development;

(c) In Bolivia, project development activities are planned in the predominantly indigenous region surrounding Lake Titicaca, leading to a portfolio of projects focusing on adaptation to increasing aridity and changing hydrology in the Bolivian Altiplano.

17. In partnership with indigenous peoples and the Christensen Fund, the UNDP Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development Programme in Asia and the Pacific is implementing eight projects in Bangladesh, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand. The projects will showcase best practices from Asia of how indigenous communities manage natural resources in order to maintain their biocultural diversity and adapt to climate change without losing their culture and identity. The Programme supports projects and partnerships that are innovative, inspirational and linked to bioculturalism and community empowerment.

D. Equator Initiative

18. The Equator Initiative (http://www.undp.org/equatorinitiative) is a partnership between UNDP, civil society, business, Governments and communities to help develop the capacity and raise the profile of grass-roots efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

19. Through the Equator Initiative, UNDP had the opportunity to participate in two events during the seventh session of the Permanent Forum. On 21 April, the UNDP Environment and Energy Group and the GEF/Small Grants Programme hosted the first event, on the theme "Consultation with indigenous and local peoples on climate change and biodiversity conservation". On 25 April, Conservation International, along with the Equator Initiative, the Tribal Link Foundation, the Government of Germany, the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, and the organization Land is Life, hosted a day-long workshop on the theme "Indigenous and local peoples and climate change: mobilizing collaborative action". During the event, held at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, indigenous groups shared their knowledge and voiced their opinions to representatives of national Governments, the private sector, United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations in respect of on-the-ground impacts of climate change and international policy measures responding to climate change.

20. In April, the Equator Initiative hosted a side event panel at the Permanent Forum where the Chairperson of the Forum and Executive Director of Tebtebba Foundation, and UNDP senior advisors and policy specialists spoke about the role of indigenous people in climate change mechanisms and biodiversity conservation efforts. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and climate change were the main topics of the discussion.

21. At the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn, the Equator Initiative organized the Community Dorf that celebrated the success of local and indigenous groups and included presentations and panels addressing such issues as deforestation. In late 2008 at the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources World Conservation Congress, the Equator Initiative hosted a similar event, the Community Poble. At the Community Poble, knowledge was shared among local and indigenous groups and discussions were held on topics relevant to indigenous peoples, such as community conserved areas, the rights of mobile indigenous peoples and the loss of forests as it relates to the loss of language and culture.

III. UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development

22. The Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development is part of the regional programming of UNDP carried out through the regional centre in Bangkok. The centre provides advice and technical support to the UNDP country offices within the region, covering 25 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The Initiative offers a neutral space in which Governments, UNDP country offices, agencies and indigenous peoples organizations/civil society organizations can be brought together to discuss and agree on frameworks for cooperation. The Regional

Initiative will continue its work within the context of the UNDP regional cooperation framework for the Asia-Pacific region for 2008-2011.

A. Human development approach and indigenous peoples

23. In 2008, with support from the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme, the Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development conducted a subregional training workshop in Thailand from 4 to 9 November 2008. The workshop provided participants with skills training in international law, using the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the conceptual framework for guiding application of the human rights and development perspective of indigenous peoples. Guided by a task force of indigenous experts on indigenous issues, the Regional Initiative will develop a manual and toolkit on a human development approach and indigenous peoples. The toolkit will be specifically designed and oriented towards indigenous peoples, often the most vulnerable and marginalized of UNDP target groups.

B. Facilitating dialogue on indigenous peoples issues

1. Interactive Regional Dialogue on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the mechanisms to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and their relevance in South-East Asia

24. On 28 and 29 January 2009, the UNDP Regional Initiative and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (regional office for South-East Asia) held the first interactive dialogue on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the mechanisms to promote it. The first day was devoted to an interactive dialogue with United Nations resident coordinators/UNDP resident representatives from South-East Asia. A number of issues were identified to ensure that adequate attention was given to indigenous peoples issues in the current work on social inclusion, poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals tracking; the universal periodic review and treaty bodies; and national efforts in the disaggregation of data.

25. On 22 April 2008, during the seventh session of the Permanent Forum, the UNDP Regional Initiative organized an interactive global dialogue on climate change and the biocultural diversity of indigenous peoples. Indigenous representatives, Governments, members of the Permanent Forum, United Nations agencies and others exchanged ideas on how indigenous peoples have responded to climate change.

26. With support from the Christensen Fund, the UNDP Regional Initiative has been conducting community dialogues in fragile ecosystems in Asia. In 2008, two community dialogues were organized in Sabah, Malaysia, and Ifugao, Cordillera Region, the Philippines. The community dialogue in Sabah, for example, drew out issues, challenges and opportunities regarding preserving the traditional knowledge system, its relation to climate change and the ways in which the community has managed to retain its culture, identity and indigenous knowledge.

2. Awareness-raising and advocacy on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

27. The regional centre in Bangkok has conducted awareness-raising activities on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with support from the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme. In the period 2008-2009, in close cooperation with indigenous peoples organizations and partners, the Declaration was translated into Bahasa Indonesia, Khmer, Bengali and Thai. The Regional Initiative will continue the awareness-raising activities on the Declaration and aim to have the Declaration translated into the national languages of Asia.

3. Communication for empowerment of Asia's indigenous peoples

28. UNDP organized an inception planning meeting on "e-Inclusion and media for indigenous peoples" at the e-Bario Knowledge Fair, from 6 to 8 December 2007 in Bario, Malaysia, to conceptualize a new initiative, on communications for empowerment for indigenous peoples within the context of article 16 of the Declaration and focusing on a human development approach. A follow-up workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in July 2008, helped sharpen the focus of the initiative and proposed additional elements.

4. First Asian Indigenous Peoples Fair

29. The first Asian Indigenous Peoples Regional Fair was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on 26 and 27 July 2008, organized by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation in partnership with the UNDP Regional Initiative. It brought together indigenous organizations and communities, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, donors and Governments to celebrate the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a symbol of the unity and diversity of indigenous peoples in Asia.

5. Asian Young Leaders in Governance

30. The Asian Young Leaders in Governance is a cross practice initiative conceptualized and implemented in close partnership with the Asia-Pacific Regional Governance Programme, the Capacity 2015 initiative and the Asia-Pacific Gender Mainstreaming Programme, initiated in 2005. It has received a grant from the United Nations Democracy Fund, which will be completed shortly. Asia Young Leaders in Governance has been recognized as a flagship capacity development initiative. The interest and vision of the leadership fellows has prompted UNDP to design a more formal mechanism for supporting innovations for leadership development at the national level. Through a competitive process, five innovative national pilot projects led by the fellows were selected for Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Future plans include training indigenous leaders and engaging national institutions to ensure greater sustainability at the national level.

C. Indigenous Women

31. In cooperation with the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation and local partners, the UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development is conducting training programmes for indigenous women on decision-making. The main emphasis of the training is to address the power

dynamics that characterize the daily lives and relationships of indigenous women in their communities. The UNDP Asia-Pacific Gender Mainstreaming Programme also provided critical input to the training and in developing the training manual.

32. The training programmes for indigenous women on decision-making in 2008 were held in Indonesia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with UNDP country office involvement: the training in Indonesia was held from 24 to 28 August 2008 in Gunung Batu Nausus, Fatukoto Village/Molo, Timur Tengah, Selatan Nusa Tenggara Timur. The local hosts and co-organizers for the programmes included members of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and its network, the Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara. The training in the Lao People's Democratic Republic was held from 27 to 31 October 2008 in Vientiane and the local hosts and co-organizers included members of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and its network, the Gender Development Group and the Community Knowledge Support Association.

IV. Selected country-level initiatives

A. UNDP Bangladesh

33. The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is a culturally diverse and physically challenging development arena, with the largest concentration of indigenous peoples in the country. The region is recovering from decades of civil conflict and social segregation. UNDP Bangladesh is addressing that legacy by undertaking a project on promoting development and confidence-building in the Chittagong Hill Tracts through its Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. The programme is implemented through partnerships with donors, all tiers of Government, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and local communities. Its purpose is to support the Government of Bangladesh, institutions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and local communities to pursue accelerated, sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction based on principles of self-reliance, local participation, decentralized government and sustained peace.

34. The community empowerment component of the project covers 16 Upazilas (subdistricts) in the three hill districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reaching a total of 2,177 communities in 2008. In addition, 450 new community women groups were formed, allowing women to develop and reap the rewards of their own community-based projects. Fifteen local partner non-governmental organizations were engaged in channelling funding and training to small community-led projects. For capacity development, programme implementation committees were formed within decentralized institutions. Logistical assistance was provided to Chittagong Hill Tracts institutions and training was provided to over 1,100 traditional leaders.

35. Confidence-building activities were carried out to raise awareness of indigenous culture and promote peacebuilding. The 2008 indigenous cultural festival in Dhaka attracted over 13,000 visitors. Study tours on the subject of indigenous institutions were arranged to the Philippines and Australia.

36. Under the education component, 90 schools in 15 Upazilas were being refurbished, and school management committees (SMCs) and mothers groups were formed for each of the schools. Teacher training courses were organized and training

manuals for teachers are being developed. Training sessions on child protection and child-friendly schools were organized for teachers. The programme also facilitated the creation of language committees and multilingual teaching and learning materials for 7 of the 10 languages of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, some of which have not previously been recorded in written form. The progress made during 2008 will contribute to the creation of a quality multilingual education system in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to promote and preserve indigenous languages.

37. The health component is expanding its activities through a network of community health-services workers, satellite clinics and mobile health teams. In 2008, a total of 210,615 patients were treated. Due to the effectiveness of the combined strategies of bednet distribution and on-the-spot diagnosis and treatment of malaria cases, malaria deaths decreased in 2008, and 15,105 cases of malaria were diagnosed and treated effectively.

38. Gender mainstreaming is a key crosscutting activity for the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. Capacity-building training programmes were organized for indigenous women leaders, together with training-of-trainers exercises. A grass-roots indigenous women leader's network was formed to link marginalized indigenous women with each other and with their communities, with indigenous peoples organizations and local government advocates. Formation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Women Organizations Network was also facilitated through the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. Each year, the Facility provides administrative support and facilitates the selection process of 20 indigenous students for study in various Australian universities funded by AusAID. To date the Facility has provided support to a total of 60 such scholars.

B. UNDP Bolivia

39. In Bolivia, the United Nations system established an Inter-Agency Working Group on Intercultural Issues and an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Council to the United Nations country team. The Advisory Council, created in December 2006, has facilitated the organization of consultations between indigenous peoples representatives and representatives of United Nations organizations and bodies, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food. As part of its collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP Bolivia also provided financial support to representatives of indigenous peoples organizations to strengthen their participation in the sessions of the Permanent Forum and other international forums.

C. UNDP Burundi

40. UNDP Burundi has supported the Associations of Batwas in developing a microfinancing and small and medium-sized enterprise project. The initiative is part of a peacebuilding programme aimed at building long-term peace after 30 years of civil war. The Akeza Association is one of the organizations that has worked with UNDP. Its primary goal has been to assist communities in capacity-building by developing income-generating projects, in particular pottery, and by providing business management training in such areas as exporting.

D. UNDP China

41. In partnership with the Government, UNDP China has been implementing the following three projects with the aim of facilitating local economic and social development for ethnic minorities in China:

1. Project on poverty reduction for ethnic minorities (2006-2010)

42. China has made important achievements in poverty reduction since beginning its economic reforms, in 1978. The number of poor people living on less than $1 per day fell from 490 million to 88 million between 1990 and 2002. While that success has lifted millions of ethnic minorities out of poverty, in comparison with other more advanced groups and areas, ethnic minorities are still lagging behind.

43. The project seeks to improve human development outcomes among targeted ethnic groups through strengthening institutional support mechanisms and community responses. It applies a comprehensive approach that: (a) helps to develop and strengthen leadership for managing and coordinating needs-based poverty reduction from the provincial/regional level to the county level; (b) supports working capacities, from the county level to the community level, for targeted poverty alleviation interventions; and (c) develops the necessary supportive institutional structures for the managed growth of tourism and cultural industries for poverty reduction based on cultural and natural assets.

2. Tibet development and poverty alleviation programme (2006-2010)

44. Development indicators in Tibet continue to rise steadily as the economy grows and average incomes rise. However, the region still lags clearly behind other areas of China in terms of human development. The programme aims to simultaneously reduce poverty and protect traditional cultural expressions by leveraging cultural resources to develop livelihoods.

3. Culture-based development for ethnic minorities (2008-2011)

45. The constitution of China guarantees that all ethnic minorities, in addition to having equal political and economic rights, have freedom of religious belief, the right to use and develop their own spoken and written languages and the freedom to preserve, or change, their cultural traditions and customs. The rights were recently recognized in the Law on Regional National Autonomy (2001) and in the eleventh five-year plan on the development of public affairs for ethnic minorities, which forms part of China's eleventh five-year plan (2007).

46. China is working with the United Nations to ensure a diverse, cross-sectoral range of international advice and expertise to enable it "to move to an increasingly human development-based approach to development for minorities. Eight United Nations agencies[2] have been working together under the United Nations-China Culture and Development Partnership Framework funded by the UNDP-Government of Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. The Framework

[2] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Industrial Development Organization and World Health Organization.

recognizes the need to reach China's ethnic minorities in culturally sensitive and appropriate ways, where cultural diversity is acknowledged as part of the common heritage of humanity, as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.

E. UNDP Colombia

47. UNDP Colombia provided support to the Government and indigenous peoples organizations to find consensus around a proposal to develop a public policy on indigenous peoples issues, with an ethnic approach, which was included in the national development plan 2006-2010.

48. In the context of a solution for the integral reparation of the Nasa indigenous peoples, UNDP has provided support to the parties to find opportunities for dialogue. UNDP has also provided technical assistance to acquire land and has provided opportunities for consensus in communities. During 2007 and 2008, the State purchased approximately 4,100 hectares of land as reparation and provided inputs for the development of a life plan. Although the agreed reparation has not yet been achieved, the progress made so far in the process is regarded as historic.

49. During the peasant mobilizations of 2008 ("Minga"), which included social sectors such as peasants and afro-descendants, UNDP, at the request of the Government and the communities, accompanied the process and promoted dialogue and consensus, with a view to reaching agreements and avoiding confrontations between communities and State forces. It was possible to define thematic lines and have political dialogue at a high level to jointly identify solutions.

50. UNDP, in coordination with other United Nations agencies, has been providing technical assistance and follow-up to strengthen the organizational capacity of indigenous communities in situations of vulnerability, in respect of their physical and cultural integrity, taking also into consideration the health, nutrition or physical security of communities that are at risk due to armed conflict, including in Narino, Choco, Sucre, Meta and Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta.

51. UNDP has also provided support to various indigenous communities in the Amazon with a view to strengthening traditions and productive processes and the management of natural resources under customary schemes. In parallel, UNDP has provided support to build mechanisms of exchange with civil society, as in the case of the Nasa, by promoting an indigenous local development agency.

52. UNDP has been able to mainstream indigenous peoples issues in various programmes, especially in such topics as reconciliation and peacebuilding and the governance and monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals. Indigenous peoples organizations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and United Nations agencies (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNDP) have built a broad framework for coordination and articulation of work and priorities for intervention in indigenous land. Together with other State entities, United Nations agencies and indigenous peoples organizations, UNDP will support the development of a plan of integral services to the Nukak Maku people, a nomadic ethnic group considered to be at risk of extinction.

F. UNDP Ecuador

53. UNDP Ecuador is part of the United Nations Inter-Agency Technical Group on Intercultural Issues. The Group will implement, over the next three years, a joint project on development, cultural diversity for poverty reduction and social inclusion, funded by the UNDP-Government of Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, as part of its window on culture and development. The project will mainly support public policies aimed at the development of indigenous peoples and afro-descendants in Ecuador.

54. In 2008, and in the context of the constitutional process, UNDP facilitated the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, who met with Constitutional Assembly members and representatives of indigenous peoples. The Special Rapporteur issued recommendations pertaining to the rights of indigenous peoples as they relate to the constitutional process. Ecuador also received the visit of the United Nations independent expert on human rights and extreme poverty. UNDP facilitated meetings with indigenous representatives and communities.

55. UNDP supported the production of several publications including the dissemination of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (in Kichwa and Spanish) and the articles of the new Constitution of Ecuador that refer to indigenous peoples.

G. UNDP Kenya

56. UNDP Kenya contributed to the establishment of an indigenous peoples advisory committee. The committee provided support for the visit to Kenya in 2006 of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. The selection of a committee representative as a member of the national steering committee of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kenya strengthens efforts to build linkages among various ongoing projects.

57. The implementation of "Assisting communities together", a global programme headquartered in Kenya, has been of particular success and has set the basis for the recently launched Civil Society Democratic Governance Facility. The Facility will support, among others, community-based organizations, including indigenous peoples organizations, with grants to strengthen their capacity to deepen democracy through improved internal good governance against established benchmarks. The Facility is funded through a multi-donor basket fund, with an initial support of $4 million.

H. UNDP India[3]

58. UNDP India supports a number of projects located in indigenous/tribal areas. A recently completed project, on strengthening sustainable livelihoods for biodiversity conservation in Sundarbans, focused on sustainable development and

[3] More information on UNDP India is available from www.undp.org.in, including the following reports: "Land rights and ownership in Orissa"; "Paharias: the struggle of a tribe for recognition"; and "Enclosing forests: towards protection of habitat".

biodiversity conservation for the Sundarbans ecosystem. A related project, on conservation and sustainable use of the Gulf of Mannar biosphere reserve's coastal biodiversity, aims to demonstrate the modalities for integrating biodiversity conservation, sustainable coastal zone management and the livelihoods of local communities, including indigenous/tribal peoples. In addition, UNDP India is participating in a joint United Nations project to contribute to the national response in reducing the risk and impact of HIV/AIDS in four North-East States, including Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya, which are home to a large number of indigenous/tribal peoples.

I. UNDP Indonesia

59. UNDP is supporting the local government of Papua in meeting one of the demands specified by the Special Autonomy Law on Papua as well as the people's demand to legalize Adat courts. The initiative seeks to promote the establishment of a special local regulation (PERDASUS) that will enable the use of Adat courts as a formal dispute resolution measure. The initiative includes the strengthening of the Adat courts in five selected districts in Papua and West Papua provinces; and advocacy and coordination among the provincial prosecution office and other institutions. As a result, in December 2008 the provincial parliament legitimized the draft of PERDASUS as a local regulation that enables Adat courts to be used as a formal forum for dispute resolution.

60. Together with the International Labour Organization, UNDP Indonesia launched the livelihood strengthening programme for indigenous people in Papua and West Papua, ensuring that indigenous people living in poverty could improve their entrepreneurial skills and thereby have better access to markets and gain economic returns from their resources.

61. Through the GEF-Small Grants Programme, UNDP provided, among others, support to the Orang Rimba indigenous people of Makekal Hulu, Jambi, and the Toro indigenous people of Kulawi, to implement collaborative management agreements with the national park authorities in the protected forest areas in Bukit Duabelas, Jambi Province, Lore Lindu and Central Sulawesi Province. The work of those communities now serves as a model for other communities seeking collaborative management agreements with Government authorities in other provinces of the country.

J. UNDP Mexico

62. In 2008, UNDP carried out activities in the context of two different projects focused on indigenous peoples. The first project entitled "Indigenous peoples in Mexico: towards a culture of information" aimed to promote a culture of information and ethnic and cultural diversity in Mexico. It focused on awareness-raising and providing support to the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples. In this context, several activities were undertaken to launch a website with resources and information (see www.cdi.gob.mx/pnud/).

63. In addition, a national study on indigenous peoples was published in Spanish. The study emphasizes the human development paradigm in order to shed light on challenges pertaining to Mexican society and constitutes the platform for a series of

publications on indigenous peoples in contemporary Mexico. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was also translated into 11 indigenous languages and two versions, with audio, were issued in the Maya and the Mexicano de la Huasteca Hidalguense languages (see www.cinu.org.mx/especiales/2008/pueblosindigenas/index.html).

64. The National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples agreed to produce a second human development report with data from 2000 and 2005. The theme of the report is the distribution of public expenditure on indigenous peoples. It is expected that the report will be issued in August 2009. The project has already made progress in the study of the concept of development from the perspective of indigenous peoples.

65. The second project, entitled "Strengthening the democratic culture in the electoral indigenous districts in Mexico", aimed to follow up the actions initiated by the Federal Electoral Institute in collaboration with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples to establish 29 uninominal electoral districts wherein 40 per cent or more of the population comprised indigenous peoples. The establishment of such districts aims at increasing indigenous peoples representation in Congress.

66. Over the past two years, UNDP has been working with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples towards implementing an initiative to disseminate information on indigenous peoples for the purpose of decision-making. The initiative had a budget of $398,000 in 2007 and $486,000 in 2008. In 2007, UNDP Mexico carried out an assessment of indigenous women's political participation. As a result, UNDP will implement a capacity development process in 2008 to create better conditions for indigenous women to effectively exercise their local authority duties. UNDP will implement a project on electoral rights and political participation of indigenous peoples that counts on the contribution of governmental and academic partners ($422,000).

67. UNDP Mexico received $70,000 from the UNDP Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund to carry out the project entitled "Empowering indigenous peoples for local development", which aims to promote accountability in local governments by increasing the capacity of indigenous communities to monitor the work of public institutions and their representatives.

K. UNDP Namibia

68. There are about 100,000 San minorities in Namibia. The San have been continually pushed off their land and currently only about 15 per cent retain their land rights. Life expectancy among the San population is 22 per cent lower than the national average and only 20 per cent are literate. The San, as a minority group, are one of the most disadvantaged communities in Namibia and are often regarded as the most dispossessed and marginalized. Within the group, women and girls are even more vulnerable, making them the most disadvantaged group in Namibian society.

69. UNDP is supporting the Government of Namibia to enhance legal protection of the San communities and their access to basic social services. The marginalization of San communities often causes them to have no knowledge of their rights or of

how to assert them. The overall objective of the programme is to ensure that while San communities, especially San women and girls, become aware of the existence of services available to them (e.g., protection against gender-based violence, reproductive health and access to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS), they will also have access to livelihoods and increased incomes to mitigate their low status and vulnerability in society. As the targeted beneficiaries of the programme, San women and girls will be involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of different activities.

70. The programme works to raise the awareness and understanding of leaders, the media and the general population on the rights of San communities and their contributions to development. Activities, including the training of key personnel in the provision of services to San women and girls, such as prevention, protection and reporting of gender-based violence, will be undertaken. Additionally, activities that deal, in part, with the economics of the gender problems at the community and individual levels will be implemented in the next three years (2009-2011) as part of the United Nations Joint Gender and Development Programme on the theme "Setting things right: towards gender equality and equity".

L. UNDP Philippines

71. Support to indigenous peoples is one of the key priorities under the Government of the Philippines/UNDP country programme action plan 2005-2009. At least three of the programme portfolios have supported local-level initiatives that seek to empower indigenous communities in different parts of the country. At the regional level, UNDP has established a regional indigenous peoples programme to complement efforts at the country level. During a recent meeting of the Outcome Board, there was a consensus to give particular attention to the concerns of the country's indigenous peoples in a more comprehensive manner. It was observed that the numerous efforts of UNDP in the country were sporadic and lacked a common development framework that rationalized UNDP interventions in respect of the issues and concerns of indigenous Filipino communities. With the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly, efforts to operationalize its provisions through a more integrated programme on indigenous peoples is imperative, as well as being a challenge to the country office.

72. UNDP Philippines carried out an indicative map of UNDP-assisted projects on indigenous peoples in the Philippines that provides a staging platform from which to formulate an integrated programme on the country's indigenous peoples. The mapping exercise indicates that there are approximately 35 new and ongoing projects, amounting to approximately $1,421,000.

M. UNDP Russian Federation

73. As in previous years, the Governance and Environment Units of UNDP in the Russian Federation have contributed to the Russian-speaking component of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Indigenous Fellowship Programme. A number of UNDP environmental projects include a component related to indigenous peoples. For instance, the project "Demonstrating

sustainable conservation of biological diversity in four protected areas in the Russian Federation's Kamchatka Peninsula, phases I and II" resulted in (a) draft provisions on public councils and local self-governance; and (b) protection of the Bystrinsk and Nalychevo natural parks with the use of traditional environmental knowledge of the indigenous peoples in the north.

N. UNDP Thailand

74. UNDP Thailand continued to strengthen its programmes for indigenous and highland ethnic peoples in the country. The activities included successful completion of programmes and the launch of a new integrated community development programme.

1. Promotion and protection of the human rights of the highland ethnic peoples in Thailand

75. The overall objective of the project was to advocate for and strengthen networks of highland ethnic peoples. This was achieved by setting up: a documentation centre on human rights, including a website; a training programme on human rights for selected ethnic leaders; protection mechanisms for ethnic peoples by providing legal assistance and paralegal training; and networking activities with civil society organizations, concerned Government departments and related international institutions.

2. Integrated community development programme in Mae Hong Son Province

76. UNDP Thailand launched a new project in 2008 in the remote highland province of Mae Hong Son in Northern Thailand to specifically improve the lives of vulnerable women and men, a majority of whom belong to indigenous and highland ethnic peoples. The new initiative is also aligned to the strategic direction provided by the Government of Thailand, which sets out, as a key priority, the challenge of addressing the disparities of opportunities and outcomes among specific geographic areas and/or population groups in Thailand.

77. UNDP, in partnership with the Mae Hong Son provincial government and other local beneficiaries, is aiming to improve the situation by promoting fair and equal treatment and access to resources and services among the different communities residing in the Province, as well as by promoting the sustainable use of existing resources, with special attention given to women and children, who make up the majority of the population in the Province.

78. The project has three interrelated components focusing on: enhancing food security and increasing agricultural and non-agricultural income generation opportunities; developing an inclusive and responsive public service to improve service delivery; and developing management and technical skills for natural disaster risk management and environmental activities, including environmentally friendly enterprises. To achieve the objectives the project strategy focuses on livelihoods generation, the capacity development of local governments, and natural resource management. The project will also develop a communications strategy that will use community radio and radio drama in hill tribe languages on issues as diverse as sustainable natural resources management, access to public services and agriculture prices.

V. Final remarks

79. Over the years, UNDP has been working with indigenous peoples in the implementation of various projects and initiatives at the local, regional and national levels. Based on this joint learning process, UNDP is committed to systematizing those experiences and providing support to Governments, indigenous peoples and other actors towards the effective implementation of the international legal principles recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

80. UNDP acknowledges the importance of strengthening its own internal capacities to respond better to current opportunities and challenges. In follow-up to the recommendation contained in the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its seventh session, in 2008 (see E/2008/43, para. 67), it has established an internal liaison committee that is tasked with internal coordination and with promoting partnerships with indigenous peoples. UNDP firmly believes that indigenous peoples are uniquely positioned to demonstrate in practice the essence of the human development paradigm, the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the linkage between peace, human rights and human development. In facing such current challenges as the food and financial crisis, climate change and the proliferation of localized violent conflicts, the vision and leadership of indigenous peoples are urgently needed at the global level as they can propose new ideas and innovative solutions.

81. The UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, and the new civil society strategy on the theme "Voice and accountability for human development: a UNDP global strategy to strengthen civil society and civic engagement" provide a clear framework for action and for the important role that UNDP will play in supporting efforts to ensure that indigenous voices are heard loudly and clearly and that they contribute to local, national and global development processes.